

**Lane Early Learning Alliance
Parent Advisory Council
March 11, 2021
6:00 - 7:30 pm
Zoom Meeting**

Notes

1. Welcome and Introductions

- Icebreaker
- Reminder of Group Agreements

2. Oregon Early Learning Systems Theory of Change (TOC)

- Role of early learning hub: think about all of the different players who influence children and families- we have been lacking parent voice in our work
- Early Learning Division came up with TOC. It shows how and why a change is expected to happen in a particular context
- Children Arrive Ready for Kindergarten (Impact)
 - Children are meeting developmental milestones starting prenatally with support from families, communities, and multi-sector systems (schools, healthcare, etc)
 - Meeting developmental milestones
 - Reduced disparities for historically marginalized groups
- Healthy, Stable, Attached Families (Early Outcomes)
 - Families are empowered to support their children's development
 - Families supported as children's first teachers
 - Families have equitable access to:
 - High-quality, affordable early care and education
 - Support for physical and social emotional health
 - Coordinated and comprehensive services
 - Opportunities for families to connect with infants
- Effective Multi-Sector Early Childhood System (Systems Changes)
 - Coherent local systems are connecting families with needed supports and opportunities
 - Aligned: Programs, policies, practices, and investments are aligned with shared vision goals
 - Coordinated: Programs, services, supports, organization, and initiatives are working together in sync
 - Family-Centered: Early childhood systems are easy for families to navigate and guided by family voice
- Systems Change Strategies (Collaborative Action)
 - Stakeholders (families, direct staff, agency leaders, funders, etc) are taking actions to improve local systems
 - Addressing root causes of local system issues
 - Cross-sector

- Integrated
 - Implemented effectively
- Effective Early Learning Hubs (Collaborative Action)
 - Collaborative efforts are building effective early childhood systems
 - Shared vision
 - Engage cross-sector and community partners
 - System-focused problem-solving and action
 - Continuous learning and improvement
 - Strategic convening
- Thoughts? Does it make sense? Too high level? Will it work?
 - Assuming this is not really meant for parents to look at? Great coordination with different sectors; will be important for parents to be in the loop- parents can plug in anywhere “no wrong door”; someone needs to hold that door open for parents to walk through it
- Anything missing?
 - No mention of problems linked to wage; an important part is looking for ways to increase wages; some parents can take advantage of services/can afford having a family and some can't
 - Maslow's hierarchy of needs- ready for k is a higher level piece than basic needs
 - Important to start early; had my child in family day care, then found out about Preschool Promise; has seen a big difference in child - is learning a lot; wants more Latinos to know about it; would like it to be a little more bilingual; the sooner the better
 - Bess: would love to see a continuum of education services from the time parents have a baby; making sure parents are aware of services
 - On paper it looks great; problem is in the practical application; big problem with language barrier- don't have enough Spanish interpreters (especially in Creswell); need to bring in Latino community more; getting parents mental health access they need (research or even reading a flyer isn't possible when you need mental health support)
 - The ideals are spot on- it's in the practice; not a lot of cohesion/partnership among the agencies involved “Ex: you don't qualify for our program but here's what you do qualify for”, our poverty line is artificially low, parents can't make ends meet and still don't qualify for services; wanted to work but was basically working to pay for daycare
 - Bess: starting to talk about Preschool Promise recruitment and those are the conversations we're having; if someone comes in with Preschool Promise application and is fine to go with Preschool Promise or Head Start, they should automatically be introduced to Head Start. Challenging because we don't have shared data system
 - Thinking of families who have figured out they qualify for services and are moving onward to public school system- what does this bridge look like? Confusion from families, they aren't sure where to go (perhaps in a time of crisis);

now I have kinder child, how do I navigate the school system? Partnership would be cool to see

- Bess: Family Resource Center Coordinators do a lot of this work; work to be done in making benefits feel more accessible; fear in going to ODHS due to child welfare; how do we streamline these things for parents?
- Would love to see expanded income guidelines;
 - Bess: qualify for Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) up to 400% of poverty level and can get childcare subsidy.

3. Kindergarten Readiness

In last Early Learning Alliance Governance Consortium meeting, the idea of kindergarten readiness was discussed that there are families who have a much different idea of what “ready for Kindergarten” means than what an educator or our school system identifies as ready.

What does it mean for you for your own children?

- Competence to engage in group settings, difficult to do that with COVID over the last year.
- Social skills that go into kinder readiness; knowing what a school setting is like; daughter is 4- she doesn't know what a classroom looks like because of COVID; academic and social, just being familiar
- Daughter entered K last fall; I looked up online what kids need- would find a huge variety of things (ranging from a few to a huge number of things); knowing the expectations of the particular school is helpful; didn't think about social/emotional part of it because she had been in preschool; was surprised to see “go to the bathroom” “raise their hand”
- Bess: for some families it's literacy, for other families they want more play and freedom; educational philosophy differs among families; families who come from other cultures, speak other languages;
 - If kids have preschool, can be warm handoff
 - Kids In Transition to School (KITS) program is for kids to learn how to go to kindergarten: 8 weeks in the summer, they go to school and learn how to share; lots of the social/emotional pieces; positive reinforcement; a parent component as well; 11 of the 16 School Districts will most likely offer it
 - <https://www.lanekids.org/kits/>
- Anything you've done that's been helpful?
 - daughter is in the Preschool Promise program and learned a lot of English; primary language at home is Spanish- now she can interact more with kids who speak English, more confident as she goes into Kinder; how can I help her to feel more secure with English language?
 - How has your interaction with the Preschool teachers been? I had good communication, teachers provide a lot of resources for the kids, help us all the time, always in contact, updates on the kids
- Were unable to do KITS because we were in full day preschool program; everyone I know who's done it has loved it; when the schools do kinder roundups- helpful to participate in those- hand holding when registering; if they couldn't help me, they would give me number of someone who could; went to a couple of different round-up's, interesting to see the

difference. I had a lot of questions as a preschool teacher, would be helpful to give parents list of questions to ask

- Used service to find daycare, they sent list of questions to ask daycare provider
- Bess: would be good to put questions in a kinder ready packet; there is a calendar that has activities every day to help kid get ready; can't be discounted that there's a whole group of kids who haven't been in group setting; schools are trying to plan for in-person KITS because kids need it. In early stages of putting together kindergarten toolkit, will be asking for more feedback moving forward
- Ready for K: text service that sends tips and tricks through text; Ready Rosie is another good resource

4. Announcements

- Seeking bilingual Family Engagement Coordinator- will take over for Bess to facilitate this meeting, assist with enrollment for Preschool Promise, going to other councils to talk about early learning hub
 - <https://unitedwaylane.applicantpool.com/jobs/537784-98101.html>
 - Requirements: Spanish-English bilingual and have some experience working with families
 - Opportunity to sit on the hiring committee- going to look at applicants on March 15th and then will take a couple of weeks to sort through applications; interviews in early April; need time to review materials and attend interviews; if interested email Bess
- Nina Watkins will be joining this group next month and will be Parent Representative on the Governance Consortium; want more parent voice at that table; meet second Friday of every month from 3:00-5:00pm; great discussion, great way to get into the decision-making level, are wanting to hear directly from parents; let Bess know if you want to join this committee: bjayme@unitedwaylane.org.

Next meeting dates Fechas de la siguiente	
April 8, 2021	<i>8 de abril, 2021</i>
May 13, 2021	<i>13 de mayo, 2021</i>