

**Lane Early Learning Alliance
Parent Advisory Council
April 8, 2021
6:00 - 7:30 pm
Zoom Meeting**

Notes

1. Welcome & Introductions

- Reminder of Group Agreements

2. Preschool Promise: Michelle Hjelm, Preschool Promise Coordinated Enrollment Specialist

- Michelle does outreach, recruitment, enrollment, eligibility
- Preschool Promise (PSP) is:
 - Free, high-quality, full-day preschool for eligible children offered in a variety of settings; 22 providers across Lane County
 - “High-quality”: small class sizes; highly trained and educated staff; emphasis on school-family partnership; 900 instructional hrs/year; use evidence-based curriculum; provide nutritious meals; offer screenings and referrals to community resources; include transition to kindergarten plan
- Eligibility requirements:
 - Age: child needs to be 3 or 4 on September 1st of program year
 - Residency: child lives in Oregon, immigration status not relevant
 - Income max: families who make up to 200% of the federal poverty level

3. Outreach & Recruitment for Early Learning Programs

Group discussion: Brainstorm ideas about what information you want to see about early learning programs, where you'd like to get that info, and any other suggestions you have about how we can best recruit families who are furthest from opportunity into Head Start and Preschool Promise (PSP).

- **What are barriers to families getting a hold of community resources like (PSP)?**
 - Is this different than early intervention services? PSP works closely with EC CARES but they are two separate services
 - If families make right above income cut off, they don't qualify
 - Income qualifications can be misleading- “from the prior year” may change eligibility; encourage families to apply and see; next year will lower the barrier for documentation from 12 to 3 months. If a family qualifies for benefits, that can be proof of income itself (TANF, OHP, SNAP)
 - The poverty level. If you did 300% of poverty we would qualify but at 200% we just make barely too much (\$54,000 for family of four)
 - I make a too much to qualify but not enough to afford preschool
 - Employment Related Daycare Credit: through ODHS, if you're a working parent and need care while you're working, you can qualify with income

up to 400% FPL (\$72,000 for family of 4); because of COVID, there is a \$0 co-pay through the end of June; if you qualify now, you can have \$0 co-pay for 12 months; only stipulation is you have to be employed (both parents have to be working in a 2-parent household)

- Since my partner owns his own business and sets his own hours we couldn't get approved for ERDC.
 - In a typical year, we fill all of the slots and have a waiting list; this year due to COVID, we are only about 80% filled; close to passing funding for summer care
 - Lack of access to computer and social media
 - Worries about wanting to make sure the adults at the preschool are vaccinated
 - Still a choice for childcare providers to be vaccinated or not
 - For Latino clients- make sure you don't need ID or information about immigration status; scary for folks to apply for federal programs
 - Include this in the flyer so that families feel safe
 - Geography:
 - in Eugene, we are on the other side of town from any locations
 - on the coast these programs aren't available; school district is apathetic about early learning
 - Bess: there is bill to expand PSP and Oregon Pre-K spots; if this happens, want to do a push to get PSP on the coast
 - If a child gets in as a 3-year-old, they don't have to re-apply, as long as they remain age eligible
 - Lack of transportation
 - Some providers offer transportation but not all
 - Lack of knowing that it's free
 - In covid times, lack of exposure to information. People aren't going to as many places as where they would normally see flyers.
 - I think that they have made things easier since we applied 5 years ago.
- **What would ease those barriers?**
 - The application process; if there was application day where someone can sit down and help fill out one-on-one
 - Next year application will all be online and will be much easier if you have the technology and will accept paper applications
 - Transportation; in years past providers would help coordinate transportation; gave gift cards, contracted with taxi companies, usually one of the top reasons for not participating
 - Don't work traditional 9-5 jobs so options for different hours would be helpful
 - Providers have option to allow some families to attend part-time but they need to meet their attendance guidelines so they need more full-time kids
 - Son is in PSP M-Th; can't find a daycare that will watch him on Fridays because it's only one day; the school is expensive for 1 day/week

- Bess: alternative schedules are a lack; strategies to build number of PSP providers- went into COVID with not enough child care and now have an even greater need with some child care shutting down;
 - I am a provider of child care, lots of parents have asked for just care on Fridays; have to tell them I can't do it for one day

- **Where and how should we be advertising PSP?**
 - bulletin boards, backs of bathroom door; waiting room in office
 - Lawn signs- families in the program display lawn signs on busy streets
 - Radio and bus ads
 - Events, run/walks; 1-pager handouts; banners at sports parks (UO games, and Kidsports, high schools, etc.); grand openings for things
 - pediatricians be advocates for the programs
 - Librarys
 - Social media, page on Quality Care Connections
 - Virtual preschool fair
 - Healthy Families
 - banner over Mohawk by Mckenzie Willamette
 - One universal application for all programs
 - Does 211 offer that feature? If you call or text with 211, you can get individual help; it's centralized information out of Portland so it doesn't feel very local; can call and say ages of children, basic income level- can help tease out individual situation to see if they have providers that match that criteria; it's a great starting point
 - Bess: would be great but with the info each program needs to collect, it's just not feasible; Head Start and PSP could possibly combine; we could be driving there in the future; goal is to reduce barriers to families
 - Short of having universal application, if we were to do a simple website, could have 2-question survey on income and then shoot you over to application of PSP or Head Start

- **Would this 1-page flyer be helpful? Free Early Learning & Supports flyer**
 - A little overwhelming
 - Too much to read; if you can say something about "daycare" instead of "early learning"; also social media is good; partner with orgs that serve Latinos - information coming from a trusted source
 - Might not be overwhelming for some; Could be poster-size, flyer, brochure style
 - Do charts bilingually; detailed information located on the back
 - Front be simple text; back has the information
 - Add in locations
 - I like how much info is there so I can compare what is best for my family.
 - Could there be QR code that takes you to a website?
 - One more click that a parent has to go through, is it another barrier?

- This wouldn't work for a flyer, but to highlight testimonials from current families in the program and graduates would go a long way in building trust for someone who's not heard of you before.
- Do you support programs with recruitment?
 - PSP has providers who are in-home, certified providers, school districts and center-based programs
 - We are focused on PSP since the funding we get is for that program. We are tasked with enrolling kids in PSP program; however, getting families access to childcare in general is a priority for the hub- want to continue to help families access care; want to get the word out about other providers too
- I am a provider for infants; applied for PSP but didn't qualify, sometimes a hassle, how can I refer parents that are interested in PSP?
 - Encourage you to apply again!
 - Refer families to the LaneKids website: www.lanekids.org/preschool-promise-sp/ (Spanish) and www.lanekids.org/preschool-promise (English)

4. Announcements or other news good for the order

- Family Engagement Coordinator update
 - In the middle of our hiring process; this person will be facilitating these meetings; Brenda has been on the interview committee; 4 candidates will be interviewed, 2 will be moved onto second round; bilingual position
 - Candidates are all Latina women
- Legislative Session update
 - One of the last pieces before they pass budgets is the Joint Ways and Means Committee - typically chair of house and senate drive to communities all over state and hear from citizens to decide on budget
 - Thursday, April 22nd 5:30 - 7:30
 - Virtual this year; welcoming testimony from Oregonians, will be held regionally; Peter DeFazio's District 4; would love to ask any of you who would like to testify about early childhood, will compensate you for your time and it's not just about early childhood stuff, it's about everything so we have to sign up and will only have 2 minutes to talk and there's a chance they will run out of time; if you're interested in potentially testifying about issues that are important to you, you are welcome to join
 - Released budget framework, proposing about 1% cut across the board because are setting aside funding to prevent cuts next biennium; intent is that programs stay at current level but are looking for ways to cut
- Adrian is joining the Governance Consortium as a family rep along with Nina Watkins! If you want anything to go to the Governance Consortium, talk to Adrian, Nina, Bess, new hire; next meeting Nina and Adrian can give update to the group on the meeting

Next meeting dates

May 13, 2021
 June 10, 2021