

## 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 Regional Stewardship Committee

October 11, 2021  
Virtual Meeting

#### NOTES

##### Present:

Gretta Sagolla, Eugene 4J  
Paige Sharpe, Springfield Chamber  
Kellie DeVore, PacificSource  
Sarah Moerke, City of Florence  
Megan Miller, Parent Representative  
Taylor Worley, Springfield Public Library  
Kristen Helton, Quality Care Connections  
Edith Osorio, ARC Families Connected  
Adrian Pollut, Parent Representative  
Kathryn Dumas, Creswell SD/Parent Rep  
Miriam Touchton, Eugene Public Library  
Brooke Edwards, Downtown Languages and Centro Latino Americano  
Fernanda Martinez, Downtown Languages and Centro Latino Americano  
Judy Newman, Early Childhood CARES  
Cheryl Henderson, Lane Community College

Kraig Sproles, Bethel School District  
Mycena Ball, Head Start of Lane County  
Annie Soto, Head Start of Lane County  
Becky Lamoureux, Moss Street  
Debi Farr, Trillium Community Health Plan  
Tricia Merrick, ODHS  
LaWanda Potter, Early Childhood CARES  
Leslie Finlay, Relief Nursery  
Tina Gutierrez-Schmich, Bethel School District  
Reta Doland, Oakridge School District

##### UWLC/ELA Staff:

Claire Hambly  
Michelle Hjelm  
Bess Jayme, **meeting facilitator**  
Kori Rodley  
Michelle Sheng-Palmisano

#### I. Review of 2019 ECE Sector Plan

The Lane Early Learning Alliance (ELA) is Lane County's Early Learning Hub, and is housed within United Way of Lane County (UWLC). Conversation today is around updating our Early Care and Education (ECE) expansion plan for Lane County.

What is the ECE Sector Plan?

- In 2019 the Student Success Act was passed by the Oregon legislature providing resources for expansion of ECE.
- ECE is the continuum of development and learning supports for children ages 0-5, including child care, preschool and early intervention and family support services.
- As part of the legislation, Early Learning Hubs, together with Child Care Resource and Referral entities and Head Start partners are tasked with creating a plan that helps outline a vision and road map for ECE services in our region and recommend expansion criteria for Preschool Promise (PSP).
- It is also intended to engage communities in planning that results in better access to ECE that meets family needs, beginning with historically underserved populations.

How Sector Plans Will Be Used

- Recruitment of providers for PSP Request for Applications (RFA), PSP slot allocation, community PSP selection priorities, coordinated enrollment outreach and recruitment plan, KPI investments.

ECE Sector Plan/Expansion Timeline

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- October – Hubs update Sector Plan. Then Early Learning Division (ELD) makes additional slot allocation request to the legislature.
- November – PSP RFA #2 opens
- Feb 2022 – Legislative report on capacity for expansion
- Spring 2022 – PSP expansion slots awarded

5 current priority populations determined by Phase 1 process:

- Children of color, children who are emerging English language learners, children with special needs, children ages 0-2, children who live in rural/geographically isolated communities.
- Other Notable Populations (from Phase 1 process)
  - o Prioritized through PSP and Head Start (HS): Children living in families navigating poverty, kids in foster care,
  - o Prioritized through HS: children who are unhoused.
  - o Children living in socially complex families: teen parents, parental incarcerations or in treatment for substance abuse; parents who have cognitive limitations/intellectual disabilities. Newcomers – refugees, immigrants. Migrant families.

## II. Group Discussion: Are 5 current priority populations still the right groups for placement in PSP?

Sub questions:

- In your experience, what impact has the PSP had on priority population families that you work with and does that change who you think we should be prioritizing for placement?
- Does it make sense to identify more specific priority populations?
- We are limited to identifying five priority populations. Are there any of the current list of priority populations that you would recommend we swap out for another?

### Providers

- When selecting providers should have a higher weight to those that offer odd hour care
- PSP sites are able to pay higher wages and need higher qualified staff, so that impacts other programs in a community when staff are leaving to join those PSP programs
- Interplay between PSP and HS, but wonder are there different outcome goals that these programs seek for families and kids?
  - o The models are different. HS was designed to serve families furthest from opportunity and is a comprehensive program that involves parents as partners and development of family and child goals; provides health screenings; also looking at siblings and other household members to meet needs.
  - o HS is required that 45% of programs have extended day programming, 6.5 hours a day, 5 days a week. Other HS sites offer 7:30-5:30.
  - o PSP has 6-hour day; programs have options to offer extended care.
- One issue was brought forth by another CCO is that they are having a difficult time in keeping and attracting PSP providers because they are unable to be paid quickly enough by the state.
  - o Procurement process takes a long time. When UW managed our local program we would support that funding in the interim. Many providers do not have that type of cash on hand.

### Priority Populations

- What happens if the categories for priority populations is too broad?

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- I like to think of the priority populations as a funnel, if the funnel gets too big, it doesn't really act as a funnel anymore.
- Would be good to look at data on how we have served our priority populations, don't want to change that yet if we do not know if we've accomplished that.
  - Have roughly 54% BIPOC or mixed race. 25 of children speak a language other than English. 13% have an IFSP. Higher percentage of kids enrolled in those priority populations than are in Lane County.
  - Rural communities: have locations in Junction City, Creswell, Cottage Grove and Dorena. But, there are big parts of Lane County that don't have PSP or HS, but also have few young kids.
- Would keeping 0-2 as a priority population help our chances for expansion?
  - Don't know. The ELD said that if the 0-2 population is one that can help you build out the supply then leave it. But if it's not going to help build the supply then leave them off.
- Updating this one: Children who are emerging bilinguals. to something more encompassing like English language learners, emerging bilinguals and multi-linguals.
- It might be helpful for the field of early care and education to have sites that are training future care providers prioritized. This helps fund the training of new staff and gives them exposure to our state's priority populations.
- Anything of those that you want to toss?
  - Student families instead of 0-2.
    - There are grants that students can apply for to get 10K to pay for child care.
    - At LCC have some of these grants but not enough for all of their families.
    - A Ford Family Foundation funded report done by the Institute for Women Policy and Research made a recommendation that student families be a priority population in all Oregon PSP programs.
    - Could they be considered "socially complex"? They could, but at this time they are not considered a priority population so we would need to add them in.
    - Student families are isolated as students and isolated as parents
  - Kids who have parents that are intellectually disabled? We have Pearl Buck in Eugene.
    - HS – parents with SSI automatically qualify.
  - HS- Kids that are adopted through foster care may not be served, because we need to count their parent's income.
  - Relief Nursery – most of our families have complicated situations and having the additional criteria around complex family dynamics that can help families who are equally eligible but more in need to be served.
  - Should we swap out families who are in socially complex situations for ages 0-2.
    - Majority of people agreed on this.
    - Annie – if going to serve families with complex dynamics, including mental health, then need to ensure upping the family supports that are included in the program.
      - This would fall to the CCR&R around provider training.
      - Perhaps this could be a part of the application process to hear how providers are going to meet this need.
      - Should say in application that 0-2 is a great need, but didn't believe we could do that with PSP.
      - When making it more rigid in how implemented, it makes it more difficult for providers to serve high-needs families.

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- Having trauma informed providers would be important

### Preschool Promise Program Barriers/Challenges to Expansion and Service Delivery

- Why are there so many kids who are HS eligible being served by PSP?
  - o The state changed the income eligibility for PSP once the program started
- I was looking into preschool promise, and I work 8-5. I don't have a way to drop off/pick up in the middle of the day. I have heard in our parent advisory group that it has been hard for other parents, especially when there isn't school on Fridays
  - o The extended day issue is challenging. At some PSP sites we offer extended care.
  - o Some of those families in rural areas are also commuting to larger metro areas and really need those longer hour options
- Is PSP more directed at the Care or Early Education Expansion goal?
  - o Both, really want to support kids getting ready for kindergarten.
- PSP was not meant to fill the child care gap, but to provide high quality ECE.
- Given the child care desert situation is there a preference one way or another in our recruitment for providers?
  - o In Florence HS, because of staffing issues and enrollment, instead of serving 36 kids we are serving 18. Wish there was a way to support providers expanding hours for a day. In a rural community although you have a number of families in a community, you need to know how many people will actually want these programs and if it works for them.
- PSP wanted families to have choice, they have asked all CCR&Rs to talk to providers in rural areas to be a PSP site and that helps the communities in many ways by professionalizing their programs and can be expanding availability of the program and not always taking away options from families.
- If you bring a quality preschool program to a community, isn't there a chance that more quality instructors would come, that expanding to rural areas would be a pathway to bringing more talent to an area?
  - o HS: have worked really hard in recruiting for providers and staff and have tried things to encourage people to come to smaller towns, it's very challenging.
  - o City of Florence: we wouldn't be a retirement community if our housing prices were higher than what is in the City of Eugene. People accept a job and then can't find a house they can afford so need to leave their position or commute.
- The state has a responsibility to build the child care system and when you expand slots you need to pay attention to the facilities available and to incentivize getting educators.
- Recruiting existing providers: Some high quality centers wanted to apply, but couldn't afford to pay all staff that higher rate, nor did they want one group of teachers on staff making more money than other teachers.
  - o ELD should negotiate with the Unions around the staff compensation
- As we fund preschool promise slots in town we start to make it harder to find infant care as non PSP programs to sustain as preschool enrollment subsidizes infant care
- CCR&R could support providers to increase their slots or create additional sites to support smaller programs without competing

### III. Next Steps

Bess will present this same overview to the ELA's Parent Advisory Council to seek their input. Then, feedback will be compiled into the ELA's Updated Sector Plan to be submitted to the ELD.