

Preschool for All Task Force Meeting Notes

January 30, 2019, 9:00-11:00

State of Oregon Building, 800 NE Oregon St.

In attendance: Andrea Paluso, Andrew Hoan, Jovian Davis (for Carla Piluso), Carmen Rubio, Amy Nash-Kille, Guadalupe Guerrero, Jenn Lynch, Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson, Kali Thorne-Ladd, Keith Thomajan, Ken Richardson, Kim Melton, Lee Po Cha, Lisa Pellegrino, Dr. Lisa Skari, Lydia Gray-Holifield, Maggie Bennington-Davis, Mark Holloway, Ingrid Anderson (for Dr. Marvin Lynn), Michael Lopes-Serrao, Mystique Pratcher, Abby Gassama (for Tawna Sanchez), Petra Hernandez, Ruth Adkins, Swati Adarkar

Welcome & introductions:

- Megan Irwin: Welcome back to the Preschool for All Task Force. I'm going to give you an overview of what we're working on today, then Commissioner Vega Pederson will reorient us to the north star of this project.
- *Megan gave overview of the agenda for today.*
- Commissioner Vega Pederson: Thank you Megan. It's a new year! Welcome back everybody. We are at an important stage of our process, so I wanted to reorient us to the main reason we're here and what we're trying to build.
- *Commissioner Vega Pederson walked through presentation on the project's "North star" and the process of this task force. Discussed existing programs and state investments in early learning, including Governor's proposed slot expansion, which this group will need to advocate for. Discussed the roles of task force work groups. Explained how decisions made here are focused on costs, access, and outcomes. Discussed task force timeline and what next steps will follow July.*

Program model & program eligibility vote

- Megan Irwin: Today you're making a decision about who is prioritized for access, and lots of choices that have to do with the program cost.
- *Megan walked through PPT presentation about what this vote means. Finance & Admin will cost-model based on your recommendations and then come back to you. You'll review and approve a final program in July, when all the pieces come together. Discussed process for vote. We will give you some more time to review the recommendations before the vote. This is not a time for wordsmithing, but we can answer questions. Explained vote requirements -- three options: agree, accept, do not agree; 80% of Task Force members must agree or accept to pass. Gave folks one minute to review the eligibility recommendations.*
- Megan Irwin: We're asking that only named task force members vote, proxies are asked to take notes & share those with their committee member, but named task force members are the only people who should vote. Are there any questions before vote?
 - Guadalupe Guerrero: When you mentioned folks who may still have questions, are we capturing what those questions and concerns are?
 - Megan Irwin: yes, now is the time to share them.

- Andrew Hoan: I want to clarify from the Portland Business Alliance perspective that we have a large board of directors that will have to weigh in to endorse the complete program. I can get behind all of these recommendations, but there will be a time when our board needs to weigh in as well. I want to make sure process moves forward. We think it is going great.
- Guadalupe Guerrero: Every superintendent would say the same.
- Kali Ladd: I want to be clear I'm not speaking for the community college or the Early Learning Council, I am just speaking for my organization
- Andrea Paluso: What direction are we giving the finance committee? Are they modeling a universal program? Is this based on the population of 3-4 year olds? What is the threshold for access?
 - *Megan Irwin*: 3-4 year olds under the standard, and would receive services for free; above that standard there will be some sort of sliding scale. The direction we're giving them is to model based on that alongside a time horizon.
- Megan called the vote for eligibility package: 14 approve; 6 accept; 0 do not approve.
 - Vote passed
- *Task force members began to discuss the second set of recommendations.*
 - Swati Adarkar: I am very confused because these are recommendations for a program that has not been set up yet. It isn't clear to me how these all sync-up with the other goals we're setting.
 - Carmen Rubio: Recommendation 3 says the program should offer half day or full day services; what about twice a week programs and other multigenerational program models?
 - Megan Irwin: Multigenerational programs are treated differently. Half & full day programs are multiple days a week. Multigenerational is being worked on in a separate group to develop what those programs will look like. They are included.
 - Kim Melton: Regarding the final recommendation about services, you said that these recommendations will go to the finance & admin subcommittee Will that include a flushing out of what that means...does "coordinated" include leveraging existing services, or does it include providing services that are needed?
 - Megan Irwin: Our beginning point is how we coordinate what already exists.
- Megan called the vote on program model package: 6 approve; 14 accept; 1 does not approve.
 - Vote passed
- Megan Irwin: Thoughts that you'd like to get on the record?
 - Swati Adarkar: It is still not clear to me what the crosswalk is between Head Start, Preschool Promise, and the Equity Fund. What would this do that's different? I'm not clear on how the finance committee can be guided yet. That's why I voted to not accept the program model package. The other question I have is: are there some assumptions of existing programs that are not working for

Multnomah County? I'd like that to be transparent. If Multnomah County is crafting a different approach, what are the outcomes that we're trying to achieve? It's hard to imagine accepting things that don't have clear outcomes. If we're going to be asking the taxpayers to pay for it we need to be clear on the outcomes. It's not a lack of support, it's a lack of understanding of how the process will align these different parts.

- Maggie Bennington-Davis: Recommendation 4 needs some context around why it is important.
- Guadalupe Guerrero: The majority of the group landed in the middle because the devil is in the details.
- Lisa Skari: I am hesitant. I Need to see more information about staffing models.
- Mark Holloway: Can you preview what the program & policy group is working on now?
 - Megan Irwin: Program & Policy is working on outcomes - what are skills and knowledge that families & children need? What do we want the outcomes at every level of the program to be? The reason this was done first is because these recommendations will drive the cost of the overall program.
- Kali Ladd: I think beyond the details, some of these policy recommendations are things we've seen in other places, where then the way they manifest themselves doesn't align with the goals. Even in the K-3 space, there are things I've seen and I know how they've worked elsewhere. I hope there is reflection and analysis of what hasn't worked in the past.
- Keith Thomajan: I am clarifying my understanding of the process. Clearly each of these recommendations raises questions. My understanding is that we're endorsing a theoretical framework that aligns with what we believe are the values of the committee. That will move to the financial model, which will be viable or not, and that will yield results. At some point we'll be asked to support a broader model. Any final endorsement is predicated on understanding that we need to link to statewide programs and funding...am I right?
 - Megan Irwin: exactly right. I'm even saying that by July we'll have something that's 80% finished -- the implementation manual will be the whole deal. A full picture will exist but there will still be questions about implementation.
 - Commissioner Vega Pederson: We're trying to build a framework so that the Finance subcommittee has meat for the work they need to do. These are the parameters. Whatever they recommend comes back here. Everything will come back to this committee for further discussion. We'll see all these things again. The subcommittees will be putting more meat on the bones to answer our questions.
- Ruth Adkins: To Kali's point: I'm wondering if there can be built into the work of the administrative subcommittee a task to look at what teeth could be put in place to ensure follow-through and fidelity to values.

- Lisa Skari: On recommendation 4 -- I don't disagree with the intent & spirit, but I think the none-at-all... we need to build it out more to make sure these policies don't marginalize communities.
- Mystique Pratcher: We talked about transportation in the past, but I didn't see anything about families experiencing hardship. If they're homeless trying to become self sufficient, will that be a part of this?
 - Megan Irwin: We'd like to see transportation cost modeled out. We know it's an enormous barrier.
 - Mystique Pratcher: On recommendation 3, if a child is enrolled they won't be disenrolled. Will that policy only affect the first child, or all children in a family.
 - Megan Irwin: that didn't come up, we'll figure out how to address that.

Workforce workgroup credential & compensation recommendations

- **Megan discussed** the rest of the agenda & introduced Christyn Dundorf & Molly Day.
- *Christyn*: I am very excited to talk to you about our workgroup. This is my passion, my love. This is what I geek out about. *Christyn walked through PPT presentation on workforce. Discussed various conundrums/trilemmas.*
- Kali Ladd: I want to say there is a law in Oregon prohibiting applied bachelor's degrees at community colleges. There is a bill this session examining that.
- Andrea Paluso: We're describing this problem as a market failure. The role of the government is to fix market failures. This issue requires robust public investment. There's no way to solve this without an influx of public resources. There shouldn't be a market for 0-5 education.
 - Christyn: When it is a market-based solution sometimes families have to move to a less-successful program to reduce costs.
- Swati Adarkar: The trajectory you share is conceivable, but I don't think that a 15 year path to a degree is a standard that can be accepted. I'm not saying it completely solves the problem. The strength of the associate programs at community colleges should be on the table for discussion. Otherwise it gives a skewed sense without saying we have a lot of strengths in early learning programs already. We have great examples that we should be incorporating into this story.
 - Christyn Dundorff: Exactly. There are things currently existing that are super important, but not all of them are very accessible. For example, we have strong associates programs, but you need to speak english or spanish fluently to access them. If you haven't been to college before, we don't have an early learning navigator like other communities in the state.
- Mystique Pratcher: For the 10-15 years for an associates degree estimate, is that based on the minimum amount of credits they can take a term? It is discouraging to describe it that way.

- Christyn Dundorff: You can totally shorten the timeline. You're right. We wanted to look at someone who is working full time with a busy family, what can you possibly manage in that scenario?
- Mystique Pratcher: Some people live off financial aid. Sometimes they do work-study or work part time. It can be done, my opinion is that those options should be incorporated into this, because this view is discouraging.
- Christyn Dundorff: That's a perfect example where we can ask: when you apply resources to the system, can you decrease the timeline? We want to bring this field up to a level of quality that we feel will result in the best possible environments for children. We also want to be mindful that when you set super short timelines and don't have a mature and fully-resourced system in place you tend to systematically disadvantage those who can least do that coordination on their own. If we had a fully fleshed out support system, my dream is that 15 years from now this is a well-oiled machine and we're creating educators in a time-efficient manner.
- Guadalupe Guerrero: This is not an acceptable timeline. We can be much more creative. It isn't an either/or situation,, we can create hybrid solutions. We could set up early education programs that are in-classroom, providing living stipends, helping cover coursework... I feel like we can do both. Lets remove barriers and make it easier to get into the workforce. We have a similar issue in K-12, especially around workforce diversity. I want us to see how creative we can be about that.
- Lydia Gray-Holifield: What we talked about in PAC is that we should examine how parents already working in the field can come in with their experience and create a hybrid program. Instead of folks getting loans that have to be paid back, why not create a hybrid program to put these parents in the program and let them be on a fast track to becoming teachers. Then every 6 months they take additional courses so they can get to equivalency. We don't have 10-15 years to wait, we need these teachers ASAP. We need them now. We have parents who could benefit from a program like this right now. Families already in the system right now want to go to work. We need to look at that now, we can't look at 10-15 years down the line.
- Andrea Paluso: I really appreciate how we discuss not losing the first generation. The workforce is almost entirely women and lots of women of color. When we've created credentialing programs in the past we've lost women of color because of lack of access. We need to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion into this discussion.
- *Christyn framed the recommendations for discussion.*
 - Christyn: The recommendations are that people who are beginning this program have compensation that is equivalent to the average teacher wage in Multnomah County, and the program assistant role for those programs is set at the average paraprofessional wage in Multnomah County. The credentialing recommendation right now is that there be a tiered system and that there always be an equivalent. And that there be a target that moves as the next generation ages up.
- *Group broke up into small group discussions about these recommendations & personal experience.*

- Amy Nash-Kille: Targeting compensation increases for one portion of the workforce (3-5 age range) could have unintended consequences for those working in 0-3. I am concerned about sucking the air out of the room for the 0-3 population, which is arguably our most vulnerable population. A higher compensation may draw teachers away.
- Ruth Adkins: I am wondering how we prevent turnover, and am excited about the radical sea-change we're discussing.
 - *Christyn*: According to the recommendations, the entire workforce should receive sustainable wages.
- Amy Nash-Kille: Some of you may be aware of work NAECY has done around this profession. They're recommending a three-tiered approach. I recommend we align with that for accreditation.
- Andrea Paluso: we just voted on recommendations to send to the cost-modeling team but we haven't voted on these recommendations. Will that model reflect these wage models?
 - Mark Holloway: We're working on the framework but actual numbers won't be fleshed out until after you accept these recommendations
- Andrea Paluso: It would be great to outline what the supports be baked into the system will be. What supports will help providers maintain their status?
 - Christyn Dundorff: This is our initial charge, that's the fun stuff that we get to work on as our second charge. It's important for us to provide you with a description of the kind of things we're pulling together.
- Guadalupe Guerrerro: We need to keep defining what that career ladder is. I hear pay parity with K-12, but we don't have parity in K-12 because of different levels of education. We should create incentives for continued education so folks can see their investment in learning result in higher salaries.
- Lee Po Cha: One thing we're talking about is that we'd like to see us be more aggressive on the timeline for credentialing... we're going to be asking the taxpayers to buy into the program. The worst scenario may be what you presented, but we should look at the timeline in a much more aggressive way. I think that maybe basing wages on Multnomah County standards is, if we want to attract & maintain bilingual and bicultural teachers we need to be careful to think about how we maintain incentives for those folks.
 - Commissioner Vega Pederson: To clarify, are you saying we should have a higher pay scale, or a higher pay scale for folks with additional language skills?
 - Lee Po Cha: I think that's something to look at.
- Kali Ladd: What are the proficiencies to which we tether pay, other than degrees? It is more than just a degree.
- Lee Po Cha: The other important point is should we try to consider individuals who have degrees from outside the US
- Ruth Adkins: I am concerned about HS students not having the maturity or life experience necessary to be with the children. I'm Interested in more options for CDA options for parents. Emphasize the experience of parents. Don't lead with the 10-15 year status quo.

- Carmen Rubio: I'd echo what others say about credentialing and looking at other experience. How do you assess competencies and reward competencies?
- Mystique Pratcher: I wanted to say that when we talked about high school students who are sometimes 18, we discussed even 16, students can work at age 15-16, there should be something targeting lower aged students so they can start preparing for the workforce requirements. For example, CPR training.
- Amy Nash-Kille: I want to say in terms of data: experience is a better outcome than a degree. I want to see that rewarded.

Megan Irwin: All this feedback will be worked through at next workforce group meeting. In February you will be discussing outcome guidelines & vote on these recommendations.

Meeting adjourned at 11:01 am.