

## Preschool for All Task Force Meeting Notes

February 27, 2019, 9:00-11:00

Video conference meeting due to weather

### Welcome & Introductions:

- Megan Irwin: *Discussed how the meeting will work via videoconference.*
- Commissioner Vega Pederson: Thank you, Megan. Thanks everyone for your flexibility this morning. I want to kick us off by talking about the north star and purpose of this task force. *Used PPT presentation to define “north star” and “preschool for all”.*
- Megan Irwin: *Discussed agenda and next steps. Questions will be posed via chat box.*
- Megan Irwin: Today, we’re diving in to discuss the early learning workforce. EcoNorthwest will be giving a presentation. Try to hold in your minds the big picture during that presentation, specifically, these three things: 1: how the salaries she’ll show you link to our workforce shortage; 2: how does the workforce shortage impact our credentialing decisions, especially in the early days of the program; 3: how do our values drive our ability to deal with these challenges?

### Presentation on workforce data

Lisa Rau from EcoNW presented on the workforce data using a PPT presentation.

- Megan Irwin: Defined “Oregon Registry Online” and the role it plays.
- Ken Thrasher: How many school districts with early childhood programs have integrated the pay salary scale between preschool and regular educators, like David Douglas School District?
  - Lisa: I am not entirely sure. That’s a very good question, we didn’t look at individual district-level current pay. I’m not sure who is already integrating them.
    - Ken Thrasher: That might be a good survey.
    - Megan Irwin: Unless a district is running a preschool promise program they probably aren’t integrated yet because it takes time.
    - Marvin Lynn: PSU has dual education programs. Teachers can work on other scales because of other licenses they have. Bowling Green State requires all teaching candidates to double major in another education field, so they all go into the workforce with the same payscale.
    - Megan Irwin: PPS says they have integrated. *From chat box:* “PPS has integrated its Head Start PreK teachers into its salary schedule. Columbia Regional Program has done the same. CRP is a contract of PPS. Also, PPS Title and Preschool Promise PreK teachers are integrated.”
  - Lisa: We tried to be inclusive of different definitions of programs that have the same standards. We tried to align well with the Oregon registry. There were some standouts, for example, Mount Hood Community College has had a big growth in their program. There has been a lot of investment in building out these programs in our area.
- Andrea Paluso: I really appreciate the starting point of wages, but we need to remind ourselves of the demographic information of the people doing these jobs. The childcare

workforce in Oregon is 95% women and the average wage is \$37,000, and most workers are raising children too. Most probably can't afford the care that they provide. They're also disproportionately women of color. The way we develop the professionalization of workforce can affect how the existing workforce can access.

- Dana: New Jersey had a very comprehensive approach to its workforce and didn't see a decline in the diversity of the workforce.
- Keith Thomajan: From a business model perspective, it's good to hear that the systems-level providers (PPS, PSU, etc) are paying at parity. Can we assume that the pay structure will be harder to make pencil-out for smaller and home-based providers?
  - Lisa: Yes, absolutely. Why Preschool Promise set lower minimal pay levels as they got started was because they wanted to make sure they didn't adversely impact existing smaller providers who may not have the same efficiencies that a larger scale provider has.
    - Keith Thomajan: We must ensure a livable wage, comprehensive benefits, and equity. Must build equitable solutions across models.
  - Dana Hepper: In addition - the salary minimums are harder to reach when programs are blending preschool promise dollars with private pay. The private pay tuition can't keep up.
    - Megan Irwin: The Preschool Promise minimums are hard, but the targets are aspirational goals.
- Andrew Hoan: I have a credential question - what about candidates who have an MA in Education and National Board qualifications but no state license?
  - Lisa: The info I included doesn't consider licensure. Just completion of degree, not completion of state licenses of any kind.
  - Megan: Oregon doesn't have a statewide preschool license.
- Sadie Feibel: It's not completely clear to me what the pathway is for providers who have little to no formal education but who have years of experience and community based education. This question can wait if it is covered later in the agenda.
  - Megan Irwin: That blends perfectly into the way the workforce workgroup has been thinking about this issue.
  - Dana: Parallel and early investments in higher ed and professional pathways become really important. BUILD did a great report on what New Jersey did to retain a very diverse workforce as they moved toward a court-mandated BA degree. We can also "grandmother" the workforce in.
- Megan Irwin: Moving into next part of our conversation, we'll be talking about workforce credentialing. The recommendation focuses on the first generation, working with the existing workforce, and a second generation where we begin to increase required training & education requirements. I will walk through definitions in presentation. *Megan used PPT presentation to inform about workforce credentialing. Started by looking at recommendations, then a walk through of equivalency system.*
  - Sadie: Achieving step 7 requires many hours of training. I'm thinking about folks who don't have that time but have worked 10-15 years in the field. Would it be worth it for them to log that many hours, or is there a way to grandfather them in?

- Megan: The workgroup grappled with that, because there has to be a credential for a program of this scale of investment, but we also talked about how we grandfather folks in and what kind of evaluation of competency can be put in place to grandfather in folks. Until the work group knows how the task force will vote on acceptable credentials, they are holding off on developing that.
- Dr. Marvin Lynn: Can you say what distinguishes associates degrees & bachelors degrees in early childhood education?
  - Megan Irwin: Number of hours & content. AA degrees are more accessible to the workforce. PSU has done the best job in creating content that goes deeply into early childhood education, as has Southern Oregon University.
  - Dr. Marvin Lynn: We are looking at expanding it at PSU, because we have seen it take off at the Masters level. Does someone with AA have same "classification" as a person with BA?
    - Megan: I'd love to talk to you more 1:1 about this. In terms of compensation that is up to this group to decide. The State has tiered salaries. Some programs may require different credentials.
- Dana: How is the first set of recommendations different from what is allowed under Preschool Promise - an AA, but with allowable waivers for lead teachers who do not yet meet the current requirement.
- Dr. Marvin Lynn: The Core Body of Knowledge is very clear and consistent with my understanding about what teachers need to know.
- Dana: We should also be aware of NAEYC's Power to the Profession work that is working with early care and education providers across the country to set national core knowledge categories. I'm guessing ORO will be tracking that work and determining whether to pivot.
  - Megan Irwin: Power to the Profession is not complete yet so it's something to keep an eye on, and then there may be work to align our systems to that.
- Amy Nash-Kille: Yes - there is a recent draft of NAEYC's Power to the Profession recommendations that recently came out - it includes three tiers of credentialing. NAEYC is gathering comments right now on the work.
- Dana: I am guessing these are the first 2 people in the classroom, and that the 3rd person in the classroom would not have to have a CDA. Is that correct?
- Keith Thomajan: I appreciate the value of including BA/AA requirements for a future state model. And, I want to underscore the importance of the equivalent pathway being treated as a co-equal pathway (gets at Sadie's point I think). Given disparities in degree attainment, my concern is that we won't invest equitable energy and resources in building that equivalency pipeline.
  - Megan: This group needs to keep that in mind when thinking of recommendations.
- Mark Holloway: Trying to match up K12 & preschool, but just because there isn't a step-system in K12, it can't be apples to apples. But I want to ask, is the step system considered a well constructed system?

- Megan: Depends on who you ask and perspectives about formal training vs community training. Community colleges do accept equivalent community based credit for folks beginning at the step 7 level. Articulation agreements do exist but they are difficult to navigate. There are many differences in beliefs about the importance of credentialing.
- Dr. Marvin Lynn: What I meant is that people can get the preparation they need through multiple pathways. BAs can give a base of knowledge, but a lot of our graduates can be missing an understanding of the experience of the students.
- Ken Thrasher: Challenge is that K-12 is set up based around credentials & time with a pay scale. What we're looking for is identifying quality and how do you identify quality for the pay structure? How do you improve student outcomes with quality educators?
- Dana: There are a couple of ways to work around the hours: 1) allowing the awarding of community college credit through demonstration of skill; 2) observation of practice
  - Megan: Workforce workgroup totally agrees. We need to make that clear in the recommendations
- Andrew Hoan: There are currently many preschool providers in the county that are private providers and including them will be critical to achieving PreSchool for All / and many do not have a QRIS rating. From my understanding this is because they have chosen to be certified by other academic bodies. For example: Montessori, International Baccalaureate, the Northwest Association of Independent Schools (NWAIS), and critically the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). Their workforce may therefore might also not be captured within the QRIS database. Are these credentialing programs being taken into consideration?
  - Megan: That is correct. Policy & program team are talking about what are the systems we'll use starting on Friday. You'll hear more about that in April.
- Lydia Gray-Holifield: what happens to the grandmothers? and home childcare providers?
  - Megan Irwin: That gets to the question from Sadie. To be part of PreK for All, you must be working in a licensed program. Those in licensed programs will fall into career development or grandfathering process. Group is contemplating what it looks like to support workers in non-licensed programs.
- Andrea Paluso: Are we assuming that our cost modeling for this program will include subsidies and scholarships to ensure current providers can access full financial assistance to pursue these educational programs? And that there will be adequate investment in program staffing to help educators move through the credentialing system/process with appropriate technical assistance and support?
  - Megan Irwin: Yes. First we have to figure out what the supports need to be, and then that needs to get built out and cost-modeled. Wages & Teach is a good example of a model that works.
  - Megan Irwin: We also need to talk to you about proposals for compensation.
- Dana: My overarching question is: are we lining up to existing OPK and Preschool Promise and (to be developed) Equity Fund systems? Or are we developing something different?

- Megan Irwin: Yes we are working to align with existing programs like Preschool Promise and the equity fund. We're also considering options that deepen or expand work that has been done at the state level due to the unique needs of Multnomah County. Group voting in favor of the recommendation as-is would align with the state.
- Andrew Hoan: Building on Andrea's point about current providers /is it expected that all providers will have to have to participate in the Oregon Registry in order to be included? Concerning the expense – many current providers extend significant resources towards professional development and school certifications. As the Work Force Work Group notes, it is extremely expensive, although absolutely necessary, to maintain and grow investments in faculty and staff. Is QRIS certification going to be an added expense for the current PreSchool infrastructure?
  - Megan: Yes (first question). Yes, many are free but time is money for many folks. (second question). Yes (3rd question).
- Andrea Paluso: I appreciate Ken's question about how to measure quality and factor in to wages - and wonder how we would think about quality if we included parent feedback in an ongoing way - in addition to school readiness measurements. Might we develop a more comprehensive understanding of quality that more fully recognizes a variety of quality inputs and outputs important for different communities in this program?

*Megan Irwin used a PPT presentation to present on the compensation recommendations.*

Commissioner Vega Pederson: This compensation recommendation from the task force was the one I've had the most difficulty accepting. I'm not sure how the straight salary recommendation without a link to credential levels provides incentives for additional credentialing.

- Dana: But Kindergarten teachers are on a salary schedule. They don't start out making the average their first year. That is the point of a minimum. And we have to be sensitive to not push out existing providers who also accept tuition, which is more likely to happen if we have a salary requirement at kindergarten average without flexibility. JVP, I agree with your comment. That is why Preschool Promise sets up the tiers. We should support people to continue education, and compensate them when they do!
  - Commissioner Vega Pederson: Thank you for everything you've been doing. -
- Task Force member: Really appreciate comments & questions on this issue. Recommendation when I first saw it was a simple statement but I think i'm looking for this group to add on complexities based around things that came up in this conversation.
- Ruth Adkins: I would defer to the experts at the table, but staying consistent with Preschool Promise seems important to avoid unintended complications.

### **Program standards & evaluation:**

- Megan Irwin: What are we going to require all programs to develop as skills in young children? We're just going to focus on standards today due to time.
- Amy: *Unpacked recommendation using PPT presentation.*

- Dana: This seems to be mixing child development standards with program standards. early learning guidelines and motor skills are child-level. parent & family is program level. for Program level, it seems like the starting place would be the Head Start program standards and/or the Preschool Promise program standards. This also links back to the question asked earlier about NAEYC, AMI, and other credentials.
  - Amy: Motor development is a child level standard. When we can discuss this in more detail next month we'll talk about how we want to look at program level eval and child level standards. We won't be mixing assessments, child level will be looking at child-level standards.
- Dr. Marvin Lynn: What are the Dual Language approaches based on?
  - Megan Irwin: There are many citations to answer that question in the document, don't remember off the top of my head. There were 4 consultants including Miriam Calderon who advised the group on this question based on research & personal experience.
- Sadie: To Dana's comment, from my perspective the standards around parent and family engagement are child-level, as they are tied to a child's success.
- Ken Thrasher: Fact that the Early Learning division left out physical development is worrying
- Ruth Adkins: I'm feeling a tension between the obvious importance of ensuring quality experiences/programs for children with avoiding compliance burdens for children, teachers.
  - Megan Irwin: The work group is grappling with that. Teaching preschool and working with children is really complicated. What is our responsibility to support folks who are doing this while honoring commitment to program quality? There is a commitment to keep regulatory burdens low.
- Amy: From an assessment standpoint, we're very aware of assessment fatigue and the importance of these standards being straightforward and that we're not measuring unactionable things. These standards will guide curriculum choices. There should be an alignment there -- that doesn't mean pulling out standards all the time, but having curriculum aligned with standards is important. Parent/family engagement is very important too. Family support is very predictive of children doing well.
- Andrew Hoan: Roughly there are almost 100 preschool programs that currently offer full language immersion, where parents opt for their children to be immersed in a second language. Therefore these skills might be developed in that target language and not the native language.

*Megan Irwin previewed next month's meeting agenda.*

*Meeting adjourned.*