

Preschool for All Task Force Meeting Notes

May 29, 2019, 9:00-12:00

State of Oregon Building, 800 NE Oregon St.

In attendance: Andrea Paluso, Andrew Hoan, Carmen Rubio, Amy Nash-Kille, Guadalupe Guerrero, Jenn Lynch, Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson, Kali Thorne Ladd, Ken Richardson, Ken Thrasher, Kim Melton, Lisa Pelligrino, Lydia Gray-Holifield, Maggie Bennington-Davis, Mark Holloway, Michael Buonocore, Michael Lopes Serrao, Petra Hernandez, Rachael Banks, Ruth Adkins

Welcome & introductions

- Commissioner Vega Pederson: Welcome everybody. We have a ton of things to get through today. Feels like a lot of pieces are coming together. This is our second to last official meeting as a group so we are coming to the culmination point of the work and seeing the shape of what's come together. I'm sure everybody in this room heard that the Student Success Act passed the legislature. We're working to figure out what that looks like for Multnomah County, but it's great to know there is support statewide for the work we're doing.

- *Megan provided an overview of the day's agenda.*

Administration recommendations vote

- *Megan provided a review of the recommendations.*
- Ken Thrasher: Overall, I thought about this. This is really critical because you don't want to create another inefficient bureaucracy. Structure must be clearly defined because of how you are impacting multiple governments. 2-3 years ago the SUN school program had a poor communications effort when expanding, and that had negative impacts. I just caution that we really think through this from an admin/governance standpoint because this will drive a lot of the outcomes.
 - Mark Holloway: We agree, in the work group our charge wasn't to find a specific agency, but even the SUN program was originally envisioned to handle EL, but they haven't had the resources yet. We certainly discussed it.
- Ruth Adkins: How does ELM fit into this?
 - Mark Holloway: We pondered putting in a footnote with potential agencies, but decided it was a step too far. ELM does a lot of good work, we need to figure out who the best central player is, preferably without creating something new.
 - Commissioner Vega Pederson: We didn't want to target an organization without knowing everything we needed. It is going to take a lot of conversations with various stakeholders around the state to account for their plans too.
 - Mark Holloway: The other important aspect is that this has to deal with transportation and housing entities as well. When you start to calculate where this fits, you have a lot more factors than just the school system. Our families are highly transportation dependent.

Vote:

- Agree: 16
- Accept: 1
- Oppose: 0
- Comments for the record:

Infrastructure

- Sarah Zahn & Margaret Mahoney used a PPT to provide an overview of the infrastructure recommendations.
- Ken Thrasher: You have to keep in mind existing providers as well as new growth that is expected. We need to deal with existing providers' needs now.
- Mark Irwin: That's an area where philanthropic organizations can join in and help us tackle that challenge.
- Ken Thrasher: You have to talk to the providers and understand what their needs are today.
- Commissioner Vega Pederson: Thank you both for the work you've put in on this. I'm envious that you've been able to be in the field so much. Going back to tax policy, can you talk about new market tax credits and how they can impact this?
 - Sarah Zhan: New market tax credits are tax credits that can be used in specific ZIP codes to incent development. Part of a recommendation may be to map where those are available and understand how those may be applied.
 - Margaret Mahoney: They are a critical tool for affordable housing providers.
- Kali Ladd: Aside from philanthropic gifts, large foundations have funding for capital development. Was there a conversation about that? A lot of the money has been going to housing, there may be more money available that way.
 - Sarah Zahn: The idea is that there should be a combo of tools out there between grants, loans, tax credits, and PRIs that we can use. There's a whole bucket of tools that we need to think about with this lens. Affordable housing has done a great job claiming this resource. Can we build the convo around early learning and start to claim similar tools? To us that's a central administration role as we think about the various needs for this.
 - Margaret Mahoney: Sounds like you are also raising the education of the philanthropic community.
 - Mark Hollway: Funders circle will have an update on this area in June
- Lisa Pellegrino: Are you anticipating that the providers will drive this?
 - Margaret Mahoney: Central admin will provide the hub for coordinating necessary growth and outreach to various jurisdictions.
 - Sarah Zahn: Ultimately, there is a level of education needed for providers to give them the tools they need to tackle these issues. We saw many providers who remarked on how large a part of their work this stuff is. They have to spend less time focusing on caring for children because they have to tackle these issues too.

Workforce development framework

- Megan Irwin: Shifting to a discussion on the workforce development framework recommendations. This work represents a capstone for the things that this group has been discussing for months. Christine Waters from Multnomah County is going to share this work with you, and then you'll break into small groups.
- *Christine Waters used PPT to explain the workforce development framework recommendations.*
- Megan Irwin: Moving into small group discussions, we have two questions for you: are these the types of supports that will recruit and retain a diverse workforce we want? And is there a way that your organization can help support these strategies?
- *The group discussed these questions in small groups*

Debrief

- Commissioner Vega Pederson: We answered the questions and felt like there was a strong sense that you were looking at all the different pathways that people could use to come into this field. We talked about how we need to create strong partnerships to make this happen. We were thinking about the different provider types and the different pathways they may want to use. We talked about the way that existing organizations and institutions can support that. CBOs could be great spaces for recruitment of a diverse workforce. Early partnerships with CBOs are important. We support the recommendations.
- Ken Thrasher: We thought the recommendations were appropriate. We talked about having flexible benefit plans so teachers can pay down debt faster. We recognize that training programs impact personal and work time. Looking at clear strategies to avoid turnover, especially between districts of different sizes. Pay parity with k-12 is important. We should integrate health, family, housing, transportation needs. On the second question: schools and providers need recruitment strategies to get a diverse workforce. Nonprofits need to advocate for an agenda that supports this work. Higher education providers need to work on hiring. Have high school career ed for teaching, so there's an awareness for young people, so people know how to become a teacher.
- Kim Melton: We had a couple places of focus. One was being sure that we include the importance of who the coaches and people we want in the space are, as well as preparing the diverse workforce we want to see. We want to make sure that certifiers can communicate with providers. When people are teaching, the coaches need to look like the families they are coaching. Are internships paid or are we just getting free labor? We also framed it in a conversation as when we talk about additional certifications, do we have what we need at the state level to not create a bottleneck? We need the state to be a direct partner. Many levels will need to be part of a larger discussion.
 - Christine Waters: For internships, we did not at all intend it would be free labor. We would hope that teachers in high-performing programs can become coaches and mentor other teachers. We should create a pathway to become a coach.

- Ken Richardson: When we looked at these we felt like we were comfortable with the recommendation, although it all comes down to the details. On one side is the recruitment, what does that look like on the ground? Second is the retention, the pipeline in general for educators is already borderline crisis mode. We now have the opportunity from the Student Success act It's a good problem to have but it's a problem. There aren't enough educators in the pipeline, so how do we ramp up fast? How do we do things differently? How do we avoid replicating systems we already have? We were also fortunate to have a parent, Petra, who shared that parents are there and want to engage, they just need to see the pathway. We at David Douglas have not had a challenge with retention for preK, because we made a decision to pay them well. There are people educating every day, how do we bring them into this system? Is there a conversation about gender, is there a conversation about gender that we should be looking at and accessing as well?
- Carmen Rubio: We also talked quite a bit about training. We have an issue about training. How do we ensure high quality training? We need to ensure quality as we expand.
- Lisa Pellegrino: We talked about the advocacy to change the system that creates these bottlenecks, we are motivated to take that to funders and advocacy circles. They tried to do a lot of these things and hit structural barriers. Institutionalizing the ways around these barriers would be helpful.
- Mark Holloway: Our specific request is to use stronger language than "partner", something like "demand" change to structural barriers.
- Ruth Adkins: It's not just a Multnomah County issue. Politically, we may want to partner with other hubs to find statewide champions.
- Lydia Gray-Holifield: in terms of framing language, I would like to see the word partner instead of support. I don't want you to "lift us up", I want you to partner with me and see me as an equal.

Looking back/forward

- Megan Irwin: Shifting to a future-oriented conversation. Megan used a PPT to review the work of the TF, and the next decisions that have to be made.
- Commissioner Vega Pederson: Megan just gave a great summary. It's very exciting to see the work that has been done by the different committees and it is providing us with a model for a program that can expand access to preschool for all. We have the north star that we need to create culturally specific programs that respond to the needs of our families, and is centered in the conversation about quality. You can't have a quality program without that.

Preschool for all cost estimates

- *Lisa Rau from EcoNW used a PPT to provide current cost estimates.*
- Michael Buonocore: I've never had anyone define "universal" can you do so?
 - Lisa Rau: We want people to be able to take care of their children. We could see coverage levels up to 95%, it usually isn't that high.

- Commissioner Vega Pederson: The goal has been to provide universal access, knowing some parents will choose other options outside this program.
- Lisa Rau: Also have to factor in some level of tuition payments. We factored in a 7% estimate, which is a general ballpark used by the federal government. We talked about various levels of year-lengths, I started with 180 day/year, which is just a ballpark.
- Ken Thrasher: What percent of the overall K-12 system in Oregon is in Multnomah County.
 - Mark Holloway: About 90K students are in Multnomah County.
- Ken Thrasher: So about 15%.
 - Mark Holloway: Yeah, and in June we'll look at revenue options for areas in this range. We need to look at options to provide about \$200-250 million.
- Ken Thrasher: Did you also look at system costs?
 - Lisa: yes, I looked at programs that had robust support systems.
- Ruth Adkins: Will there be different cost options for how we ramp up and get there over time?
 - Lisa: Yes, and it will include how many of these investments need to happen right away.
- Lydia Gray-Holifield: You said this is for 6-hours a day?
 - Lisa Rout: Yes, to start getting us to think about the cost. In Phase 2 we need to look at what extended day/year means relating to this overall cost. It could be more if there is a decision that you want to support a 9 day or full year program it could become a lot more. We'll have to have convos with parents and providers about their demands and what they see.
 - Commissioner Vega Pederson: I'd just add that going back to the earlier conversation about what we're trying to build, we're trying to focus on the EL aspect in that environment they kids & families are participating in, not solving the entire childcare crisis that we have.
- Commissioner Vega Pederson: We will be talking about revenue options at the next meeting.

Phase 2:

- *Commissioner Vega Pederson used a PPT to explain the work that will take place in Phase II.*
- Michael Buonocore: It seems like the cost estimates and the infrastructure costs are discrete. So the infrastructure costs are not included in this estimate? It seems there are some funding streams that provide for both, and some for only one or the other?
 - Commissioner Vega Pederson: Some of the things reported by the infrastructure group like having a position in the central admin hub are built into the cost

estimate. Some are the grant opportunities and state investments, those are things that are outside and not built into the estimate.

- Mark Holloway: We're also talking about a much larger investment several years down the line when we have a stronger system. Let's not lock ourselves into a revenue stream that may not be the best one a few years down the road.
- Ken Thrasher: So you have an operating and capital budget.
- Mark Holloway: Yes, operating is built into the cost estimate, capital budget is above and beyond. Big costs will come down the line as we mature.
- Commissioner Vega Pederson: The other idea I had that has borne out is that this is truly about providing access to high quality PreK, but it's also about workforce development and building a workforce that this type of investment needs and deserves.
- Mark Holloway: When we started this, SVP looked at what other communities have done. What we didn't see in any of those instances is any type of community-based policy making, I think we've become a national model for that. For the next phase we don't want to miss out on opportunities. We will need to do major coalition building and come up with financing for a campaign. We should recognize the extraordinary work we've done.
- Commissioner Vega Pederson: Multnomah County is an invested partner in this work. The next budget will feature more money for this work to continue. We're just getting started at the overall task of making this a reality.

Meeting adjourned