

Early Learning Hub of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties Governing Board Meeting Minutes

Meeting Commenced	2:00 pm, October 2, 2025 Leadership & Learning Center, Rainbolt Conference Room 555 NW Van Buren Ave., Corvallis
Meeting Called By	Bettina Schempf
Staff Members Present	Kristi Collins, Sam Rounsavell, Bryan Steinhauser
Others Present	Andrea Lengel, CSC Head Start Director
Version	Approved
Recorded	Yes

Agenda topics

Roll Call		Board Members Present or Absent							
	Present	Absent		Present	Absent		Present	Absent	
DeAnn Brown Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Susan Halliday Benton County K-12	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bettina Schempf Benton County Human & Social Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Belit Burke Linn County Human & Social Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jason Hay Education Service District	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dale Moon Fiscal Agent Non-voting member	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Dean Craig Linn County Business	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tammi Hillhouse Oregon Department of Human Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paul Smith Benton County Early Childhood Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Bonney Dietrich Linn County K-12	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Todd Jeter Coordinated Care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Diane Wilkinson Lincoln County K-12	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Barbara Dougherty Lincoln County Early Childhood Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Paulina Kaiser Benton County Health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lynnette Wynkoop Child Care Resource & Referral	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Laura Farmer Benton County Parent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stephany Koehne Linn County Early Childhood Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Quorum

A Quorum was present. There are currently 16 voting Board members, and 11 were present at this meeting.

Discussion Item

Welcome and Introductions

Board Members introduced themselves and welcomed the newest members, Dale Moon and Bonney Dietrich.

Special Presentation**Growing Care 2023-2025 Performance Review**

Bryan Steinhauser and Lynnette Wynkoop presented a performance review for the Growing Care project covering the period from 2023 to 2025.

Brian Steinhauser, Business Liaison and Child Care Accelerator, provided an overview of his role and the Growing Care initiative, which focuses on engaging the business community and expanding child care capacity across the region. Entering the field in 2022, Brian identified home-based care as the most efficient and cost-effective way to grow capacity, leading to the development of Growing Care in partnership with Family Connections. The initiative recruits and supports new providers through financial grants, business training, mentoring, and coaching, and has been promoted through digital outreach and a website launch. These efforts have yielded significant gains: registered family programs increased by 54% in 2023–2024 and 36% in 2024–2025, with Linn County showing the strongest results.

The Business Accelerator course, offered through Linn-Benton Community College, has been especially impactful. Each cohort begins with 12–15 participants, with 9–10 completing the training, resulting in an approximately 75% completion rate. Graduates receive \$5,000 startup grants, and 88% remain active providers. Additional lessons learned include the value of direct certification for providers with prior experience, which fast-tracks them into certified family programs, as well as the notable growth of Spanish-speaking programs—up 50% in two years, with seven new programs joining.

Recruitment in Benton County, particularly Corvallis, remains a challenge, though recent marketing adjustments are showing early signs of success. The initiative also revealed unintended challenges, such as existing providers struggling to fill slots when new programs opened, underscoring the need for more business training and marketing support for established providers. Finally, Brian emphasized that while demand is high, the childcare business model remains difficult, requiring continued investment in startup grants and business training for long-term sustainability.

Looking ahead, Growing Care plans to strengthen its marketing through testimonials, expand outreach beyond the region, and share its model statewide as a proven system for building child care capacity.

Special Presentation**Poverty Representation Across Our Region**

Kristi shared supplemental data prepared by Jinguang in response to a question raised at a prior meeting regarding the over-representation of single mothers in poverty. Jinguang conducted a deeper dive into the regional data, examining poverty representation by family structure and by the age of children. His analysis confirmed the pattern noted earlier—single-parent households, especially single mothers, are disproportionately affected by poverty in the region. While poverty rates among households with children ages 5–17 generally decline, this drop-off does not hold true for single-parent families, highlighting a continued burden for single mothers as children enter school age. Kristi emphasized that this type of supplemental analysis is available to board members and partners upon request, particularly for grant applications or to gain a deeper understanding of the community, and encouraged reaching out to Jinguang for customized reports. She also noted the importance of connecting the Hub's data work with other resources, such as the Ford Family Foundation's *Oregon by the Numbers* report and the United Way ALICE report, where parallels and commonalities are emerging.

Director's Report	LBL Hub Updates
<p>Kristi reported substantial progress with Preschool Promise enrollment, noting that only four openings remain—two in Benton County and two in Lincoln County—putting the program at 98.5% enrollment as of early October. A Newport family-based provider, which has historically been more challenging to fill, currently has a waiting list of more than 60 families, indicating high demand.</p>	
<p>Kristi also announced that the Hub will be reconvening the Data and Evaluation Work Group, which will review the state's new reporting format and identify additional data that would be valuable for both DELC requirements and local board and partner needs. She emphasized that data collection should be purposeful and reflect meaningful outcomes.</p>	
<p>Kristi provided updates on committee work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiscal Oversight has met with Matt and Kristi to review financial reporting and budget structures • The Compliance and Regulatory team is reviewing the Hub Charter, new rule sets, and contracts to ensure alignment. 	
<p>She also highlighted preparations for Jumpstart's Read for the Record, coordinated by Sam. Participation is currently lower than in past years, with eight sign-ups compared to 44 last year, but outreach efforts continue. This year marks Jumpstart's 20th anniversary, and while book orders begin in October, the official Read for the Record Day is scheduled for February. The program encourages schools and child care providers to read the selected book—or any of the past 20 featured titles—on the same day to promote literacy and community engagement. Board members were asked to share this opportunity with preschool and child care providers, as well as K-3 classrooms in their networks.</p>	

Board Vacancies	Vacant Board Positions
<p>The board reviewed open positions and discussed recruitment efforts.</p>	

Consent Agenda Vote	September 2025 Meeting Minutes										
<p>The Board was asked to approve the minutes from the September 2025 meeting.</p>											
<p>Motion: Paul Smith</p>											
<p>2nd: Susan Halliday</p>											
	Yes	No	Abstain		Yes	No	Abstain		Yes	No	Abstain
DeAnn Brown	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Susan Halliday	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bettina Schempf	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Belit Burke	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jason Hay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paul Smith	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dean Craig	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tammi Hillhouse	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diane Wilkinson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Bonney Dietrich	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Todd Jeter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lynnette Wynkoop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Barbara Dougherty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paulina Kaiser	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Laura Farmer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stephany Koehne	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Voting Results	Individual Votes Cast by Board Members (Yes, No, Abstain)										
<p>Abstentions: Bonnie Dietrich, Bettina Schempf, Diane Wilkinson</p>											
<p>The Board voted to approve the minutes as presented.</p>											

Discussion Item	Budget
<p>Kristi provided an update on the budget, noting that final numbers had just been received from DELC and posted after significant work with Matt earlier in the week. The proposed budget reflects operating costs, staffing, and general figures for the biennium, though only the first year is under contract with DELC. Year two figures are currently projections, which complicates long-term planning.</p> <p>Kristi explained that the Hub is moving toward one-year contracts for larger funding streams, such as Kindergarten Partnership and Innovation, to ensure funds are fully spent down before amendments or new allocations are issued. This approach aims to provide districts with clarity and fairness in funding, while avoiding last-minute invoicing.</p> <p>The board discussed approving continued operations until the next board meeting. It was noted that Dale Moon is a non-voting member.</p>	

Discussion Item Vote	Business as Usual Budget through November 6, 2025										
The Board was asked to approve a “business-as-usual budget” through November 6, 2025.											
Motion: Paul Smith											
2 nd : Dean Craig											
	Yes	No	Abstain		Yes	No	Abstain		Yes	No	Abstain
DeAnn Brown	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Susan Halliday	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bettina Schempf	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Belit Burke	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Jason Hay	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paul Smith	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dean Craig	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tammi Hillhouse	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diane Wilkinson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bonney Dietrich	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Todd Jeter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lynnette Wynkoop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Barbara Dougherty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paulina Kaiser	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Laura Farmer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stephany Koehne	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Voting Results	Individual Votes Cast by Board Members (Yes, No, Abstain)										
Abstentions: None											
The Board voted to approve the minutes as presented.											

Discussion Item	Funding and Fiscal Report Discussion
<p>Kristi provided additional explanation regarding the budget. She noted that some line items appeared reduced compared to the prior biennium, largely due to structural changes in how funds are categorized. Family Stability funding is part of the General Fund, and our Hub has bundled these funds with Title IV-B2. However, DELC has now consolidated these funds with Coordination. Overall amounts remain relatively balanced. Coordinated Enrollment funding is slightly down, while Kindergarten Partnership and Innovation (KPI) has increased. The most significant change is in Birth to Five Literacy, which dropped from approximately \$250,000 in the last biennium to \$65,000. Kristi reminded members that this was anticipated and guided the Hub’s approach last year to prioritize shovel-ready, sustainable projects rather than starting new initiatives that could not be maintained.</p>	

She also explained that DELC shifted funding priorities more strategically rather than applying across-the-board reductions, resulting in notable changes among programs. To support new and returning board members, Kristi prepared a handout outlining each funding stream, contract language, intended use, and reimbursement process. This will be made available digitally after the meeting.

The Fiscal Oversight Committee provided feedback to improve financial reporting, including the addition of an “encumbrances” line item in the board summary. Reports will now be reviewed on a quarterly cycle: Fiscal Oversight will meet after subcontractor reimbursements are submitted but before reports are sent to DELC, ensuring a second layer of review before board presentation. This aligns with the state's drawdown schedule, meaning that the September data will be ready for board review in December. Kristi encouraged members to share feedback on fiscal reports with members of the Fiscal Oversight committee or Hub staff so that changes can be incorporated early in the biennium.

The board discussed the timing of KPI calculations, which are dependent on updated data that was just received. Jason will work with ESD to process those calculations, and results will be shared with superintendents and districts to guide planning and ensure timely quarterly reporting. Kristi noted the importance of reinforcing this requirement, as late reporting in the prior biennium complicated year-two funding allocations. She also highlighted that some districts have opted for the Hub to contract directly with community partners on their behalf, which can simplify processes and should be considered as an option moving forward.

Discussion Item	Operationalization of Workgroups
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The board discussed the status of Hub work groups, noting that while some, such as Fiscal Oversight and Data & Evaluation, are active again, several others have not been meeting regularly.

Work groups outlined in the charter include:

- Fiscal Oversight Committee
- Regional Stewardship Committee
- Data and Evaluation
- Health Care Integration
- P-3 Alignment
- Early Childhood Coordinating Council

Kristi emphasized that, per the charter, these groups are intended to be chaired by community partners or governing board members, rather than Hub staff. However, currently, only Healthcare Integration has a chair, and that role may soon need to be filled again. She encouraged board members to consider stepping into chair or co-chair roles, highlighting that leadership involves agenda-setting meetings and facilitation, but that Hub staff provide administrative support.

Members reviewed the purpose of each work group: Data & Evaluation (data collection and analysis from subcontractors), ECCC (early childhood coordination and state-required stewardship responsibilities), P-3 (alignment between early learning and K-12, including KPI work), and Healthcare Integration (currently focused on the asset mapping project). More information about these workgroups can be found on our website at

blearlylearninghub.org/groups/. With the new Birth to Five Literacy funding, workgroups will also play a key role in shaping funding plans and bringing recommendations to the board.

Diane volunteered to co-chair the P-3 work group. Dean discussed connecting with Leanne to support Healthcare Integration. It was noted that Healthcare Integration's next meeting will be in October, with no November session due to Veterans Day, offering time for new leadership to transition. Members were encouraged to explore past agendas and materials posted on Basecamp or the Hub's website to learn more before committing to participation.

Next Meeting	2:00 pm, November 6, 2025 Online via Zoom
Meeting Adjourned	3:25 pm