



Early Learning Hub

of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties

Governance Council Packet August 2026

Governance Council
Early Learning Hub
August 6, 2026
lblearlylearninghub.org

Packet Overview

In your Governance Council packet for August 2026, you will find the following information:

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3. Approval of June Council Meeting Minutes
4. Discussion Items
 - a. Strategic Investment Recommendations
 - b. PSN Transition – Discussion
 - c. Council Member Website Photo & Bio
5. Informational Items
 - a. Workgroup Meeting Minutes
 - i. July Health Care Integration
 - b. Program Update
 - c. Business Liaison

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Agenda

Governance Council Members

Laura Farmer, Co-Chair
Parent

Bettina Schempff, Co-Chair
Old Mill Center

Andrea Bartell
Young Roots Oregon

DeAnn Brown
Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians

Alicia Bublit
IHN-CCO – Standing Position

Belit Burke
Department of Human Services

Dean Craig
Willamette Workforce Partnership

Bonnie Dietrich
Greater Albany Public Schools

Barbara Dougherty
Samaitan Early Learning Center

Breeann Flesch
Linn-Benton Community College

Susan Halliday
Philomath School District

Jason Hay
*Linn Benton Lincoln
Education Service District*

Tammi Hillhouse
Department of Human Services

Paulina Kaiser
Samaitan Health Services

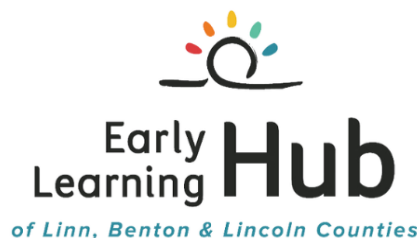
Stephany Koehne
Kids & Company of Linn County

Andrea Lengel
Community Services Consortium

Paul Smith
Strengthening Rural Families

Diane Wilkinson
Lincoln County School District

Lynnette Wynkoop
Child Care Resource & Referral



Governance Council Meeting

August 6, 2026

2:00 – 4:00 pm

Members of the public who want to make public comment must sign in. During the public comment portion of the agenda, each individual speaker will have 3 minutes.

- I. Roll Call – Zoom Participants List
- II. Special Presentation – Every Child Belongs, Lynnette Wynkoop, Director, Child Care Resource and Referral of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties
- III. Public Comment
- IV. Director's Report
- V. Current Council Vacancies – Linn 2, Benton 2, Lincoln 4
- VI. Approval of June Council Meeting Minutes
- VII. Discussion Items
 - a. Strategic Investment Recommendations – Discussion
 - b. PSN Transition – Discussion
 - c. Council Member Website Photo & Bio – Discussion
- VIII. Informational Items
 - a. Workgroup Meeting Minutes
 - i. July Health Care Integration
 - b. Program Update
 - c. Business Liaison
- IX. Next Meeting – September 3, 2026
- X. Adjournment

All members of the EL Hub Governance Council must disclose when they believe they have, or may have, a conflict of interest and may participate in discussions that are leading to consensus. If, however, consensus cannot be reached and the group uses the fallback voting process, the individual with the conflict of interest may not participate in that final vote.

Approval of Council Meeting Minutes

June Meeting Minutes

Early Learning Hub of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties Governance Council Meeting Minutes

Meeting Commenced	2:00 pm, June 25, 2026 Online via Zoom
Meeting Called By	Bettina Schempf
Staff Members Present	Matt Grams, Jinguang Lin, Jessica Morrison, Sam Rounsavell
Presenters	Erin Sedlacek, Lincoln County Parenting Education Manager Melissa Hernandez-Pacheco, Lincoln County Parenting Education Coordinator
Version	Draft
Recorded	Yes

Agenda topics

Roll Call			Council Members Present or Absent					
	Present	Absent		Present	Absent		Present	Absent
DeAnn Brown Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians	☐	☒	Barbara Dougherty Lincoln County Early Childhood Education	☒	☐	Stephany Koehne Linn County Early Childhood Education	☒	☐
Andrea Bartell Linn County Housing	☐	☒	Laura Farmer Benton County Parent	☒	☐	Andrea Lengel Lincoln County Human & Social Services	☒	☐
Alicia Bublitz Coordinated Care	☐	☒	Breeann Flesch Fiscal Agent Non-voting member	☒	☐	Bettina Schempf Benton County Human & Social Services	☒	☐
Belit Burke Linn County Human & Social Services	☐	☒	Susan Halliday Benton County K-12	☒	☐	Paul Smith Benton County Early Childhood Education	☒	☐
Kristi Collins EL Hub Director Non-voting member	☒	☐	Jason Hay Education Service District	☐	☒	Diane Wilkinson Lincoln County K-12	☒	☐
Dean Craig Linn County Business	☐	☒	Tammi Hillhouse Oregon Department of Human Services	☒	☐	Lynnette Wynkoop Child Care Resource & Referral	☐	☒
Bonney Dietrich Linn County K-12	☐	☒	Paulina Kaiser Benton County Health	☒	☐			
Quorum								
A quorum is achieved when 51% of current Governance Council members are present. The Council currently has 20 members, and 12 members were present.								

Discussion Item	Welcome and Introductions
Board Members introduced themselves.	
Breeann Flesch, Dean of Business, Education, and Liberal Arts at Linn-Benton Community College (LBCC), attended as the incoming non-voting Fiscal Agent representative, succeeding Dale. This meeting served as an introduction to the Governance Council and its work.	
Special Presentation	Lincoln County Parenting Education
Representatives from Samaritan Health Services provided an update on the expansion of Lincoln County's parenting education initiatives under the Parenting Success Network (PSN).	

Paulina Kaiser shared that Parenting Education has transitioned into the Health Education Department, aligning the program with the organization's grants infrastructure to support long-term sustainability.

Erin Sedlacek outlined the team's collaborative approach, which focuses on promoting equity, reducing duplication of services, and developing standardized marketing resources that partners can customize locally. She also shared plans to expand electronic referral options through systems such as Epic and Unite Us to improve referrals and family access to services.

Melissa Hernandez-Pacheco highlighted recent community outreach and programming. This summer, the team partnered with OSU Extension to offer a family nutrition class, with 11 families participating in a hands-on cooking session. The team has also continued to participate in community events and has partnered with New Moon Yoga Studio to offer free hybrid prenatal and postnatal yoga classes.

Melissa shared that a virtual 12-session *Nurturing Parenting/Crianza con Cariño* series will begin in August. Offering the class virtually is intended to increase access for families across Linn, Benton, and Lincoln counties who may face transportation or scheduling barriers.

Presenters invited regional partners to share parenting education opportunities and refer families to available programs in Lincoln County.

Director's Report

LBL Hub Updates

Kristi provided updates on Preschool Promise, a regional business grant, and planning for the upcoming Community Plan.

Through the regional reallocation process, the Hub secured all 28 requested Preschool Promise slots, bringing the regional total to 298. Program updates include classroom additions and adjustments at Cascades Elementary, Lacombe Elementary, Tangent Elementary, Old Mill Center, and Lincoln County School District in Newport. Regional preschool programs are currently operating at 82.9% capacity, with 51 open slots and 26 children on waitlists for preferred locations. Staff continue to work with waitlisted families to identify alternative placement options, including home-based providers.

Kristi also announced that the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC) awarded collaborative grant with \$90,000 supporting FTE to the Hub, Onward Eugene, and Douglas County to develop a standardized business toolkit that encourages employer investment in child care. Each region will receive \$30,000 to support a regional business liaison position. While DELIC is still finalizing project requirements, the toolkit is expected to focus on employer-supported child care benefits, including corporate-sponsored preschool slots, and feature regional case studies.

Council members suggested including Starker Forests as a case study based on its recent experience establishing employer-supported child care.

Kristi also discussed planning for the regional Community Plan, due in March 2027. Although DELIC has not yet released the final planning templates, the Hub plans to begin a GIS mapping project using existing regional data to identify areas with the greatest child care needs.

Council members discussed strategies for community asset mapping, including dividing larger communities, such as Corvallis, into neighborhood-level planning areas and recognizing the unique geographic challenges affecting service delivery in Lincoln County. Staff will continue working with data analyst Jinguang to develop these regional maps over the coming months.

Kristi concluded by noting that Linn-Benton Community College will begin its Summer Fridays schedule in July, and Hub offices will be closed on Fridays through the end of the summer.

Fiscal Report	Matt Grams
Matt presented the third-quarter fiscal report, including revenue, expenditures, and miscellaneous financial reports.	

Council Vacancies	Vacant Council Positions
The Council reviewed current vacancies. Open positions include: - Benton County: Business, Housing - Lincoln County: Business, Health, Housing, Parent Voice - Linn County: Health, Parent Voice Council members discussed recruitment strategies, including engaging parents participating in regional parenting education programs. Interested parents may be connected with Laura Farmer, Parent Representative and Council Co-Chair, to learn more about Council membership. Council members also discussed the importance of recruiting representatives who recognize the connection between their sector and early childhood systems. For example, housing professionals with an interest in family or community development may provide valuable perspectives, even if their primary work is not focused on family housing.	

Approval of Meeting Minutes				May 2026 Council Meeting Minutes								
The Council was asked to approve the meeting minutes as presented.												
Motion: Susan Halliday												
2 nd : Paul Smith												
	Yes	No	Abstain		Yes	No	Abstain		Yes	No	Abstain	
DeAnn Brown	☐	☐	☐	Barbara Dougherty	☒	☐	☐	Stephany Koehne	☒	☐	☐	
Andrea Bartell	☐	☐	☐	Laura Farmer	☒	☐	☐	Andrea Lengel	☒	☐	☐	
Alicia Bublitz	☐	☐	☐	Susan Halliday	☒	☐	☐	Bettina Schempf	☒	☐	☐	
Belit Burke	☐	☐	☐	Jason Hay	☐	☐	☐	Paul Smith	☒	☐	☐	
Dean Craig	☐	☐	☐	Tammi Hillhouse	☒	☐	☐	Diane Wilkinson	☒	☐	☐	
Bonney Dietrich	☐	☐	☐	Paulina Kaiser	☒	☐	☐	Lynnette Wynkoop	☐	☐	☐	
Voting Results			Individual Votes Cast by Council Members (Yes, No, Abstain)									
Abstentions: None												
The Council approved the May 2026 meeting minutes as presented.												

Discussion Item	DELC Backbone Change Process
The Council discussed the Department of Early Learning and Care's (DELC) proposed Backbone Change Process. It was noted that a recent state webinar provided limited opportunity for discussion. Council members were reminded that the public comment period remains open through July 3 and were encouraged to submit feedback through DELC's online comment form. Kristi explained that the proposed changes will not have an immediate impact on the Early Learning Hub due to its established partnership with Linn-Benton Community College (LBCC), which serves as the Hub's backbone organization. She shared that the new requirements are intended to strengthen accountability and oversight for backbone organizations across the state. Kristi also noted that Hub directors will participate in developing the upcoming Request for Applications (RFA) process to help preserve the role of local governance councils. Council members discussed broader trends in state oversight and the challenges of measuring community-based coalition work using limited performance metrics. Members emphasized the importance of documenting local perspectives through the public comment process and continuing to highlight regional outcomes achieved through collaborative partnerships.	

Discussion Item	KPI Funds
Kristi provided an update on Kindergarten Partnership and Innovation (KPI) funding for the current biennium. To improve accountability, the Council previously approved one-year contracts that require quarterly reporting and demonstrate progress before Year 2 funding is released. Kristi reported that spending varies among districts. Some districts appear under budget because their contracts extend through September to support summer programming. However, because Year 2 funding ends on June 30, those funds cannot be used for future summer programming. Staff will meet with affected districts to discuss planning for future funding cycles. Kristi also reported that one district has not expended its current KPI allocation. She noted that the district returned \$68,000 late in the previous biennium, requiring an expedited reallocation of funds. Staff will meet with the district to discuss contract performance and future funding expectations. The Council discussed whether future KPI funds should be redirected to community-based organizations if districts are unable to implement kindergarten readiness projects or fully utilize allocated funding. Council members also discussed challenges created by late funding reallocations, particularly for smaller organizations with limited cash flow. Suggestions included identifying strategies to improve funding predictability while minimizing financial risk for community partners. Kristi noted that any bridge funding approach would need to account for uncertainty in future legislative allocations. Looking ahead, the Hub is conducting a P-3 alignment project to compare district spending across multiple funding sources, including KPI, Early Learning, and Summer Learning funds. This analysis will help inform future funding decisions and identify opportunities to direct KPI resources where they can have the greatest impact. The Council will revisit KPI funding recommendations during the August or September meeting.	

Discussion Item	2026 Data Book
Kristi introduced the 2026 Data Book and invited Council members to provide feedback and ask questions. She noted that Jinguang is preparing a companion document highlighting potential strategic investment opportunities based on the data. Council members thanked Jinguang for his work developing the Data Book and accompanying summary materials. Susan described how the Hub's existing Philomath asset map supported a local community planning effort, demonstrating the value of maintaining regional data resources. Council members discussed opportunities to increase awareness of both the Data Book and regional asset maps to help partners avoid duplicating existing work. Staff noted that promotional postcards with QR codes linking to the Data Book are available for Council members to distribute. Members also suggested sharing the resource with city councils, county commissioners, legislators, and other community leaders. Jinguang highlighted several areas that were expanded in this year's Data Book, including: • Population trends and migration • Housing affordability and household survival budgets • Child care supply and market pricing • Child health and well-being indicators During discussion, Council members suggested additional data topics for future editions, including continued monitoring of SNAP participation and opportunities to better connect long-term data trends with policy decisions and public investments. Members also discussed the importance of considering broader economic and demographic factors when interpreting regional trends, recognizing that changes in community indicators are influenced by multiple external factors.	

Discussion Item	PSN Transition Update
Kristi provided an update on the transition of PSN operations into the Early Learning Hub, which remains on track for a July 1 implementation date. Revised job descriptions for Sam and Jessica are currently under review by LBCC HR for reclassification. While recent campus power outages and a holiday period created minor delays in HR processing, the overall timeline remains unchanged, and any approved compensation adjustments will be backdated to July 1. To remain within budget and preserve funding directed to community partners, internal staffing roles have been restructured. Sam will serve in a 0.5 FTE Community Coordinator role with the Early Learning Hub while continuing support for Pollywog in a lead assistant capacity. Jessica will expand her administrative responsibilities to provide shared support across PSN, Pollywog, and the Early Learning Hub. Kristi will provide grant management services as an in-kind contribution to ensure continued alignment with PSN match requirements. Because the transition is occurring mid-biennium, a foundational budget and work plan are already on file with OPEC, which has granted a grace period for submitting updates. This provides time to thoughtfully integrate the Governance Council and PSN Steering Committee. Staff recently met with Lincoln County partners in Newport to begin strengthening regional relationships and aligning efforts across Linn, Benton, and Lincoln counties to reduce duplication and improve coordination. Kristi discussed the current structure for parenting education classes. Historically, PSN has relied on LBCC part-time faculty to deliver most classes, which has supported instructional quality but also increased cost	

and administrative oversight. Moving forward, staff are working with Nicole, LBCC Parenting Education Faculty Chair, to determine sustainable faculty capacity and identify opportunities to contract with vetted community instructors for appropriate offerings. LBCC part-time faculty will continue to focus on formal, evidence-based curricula, while community partners will support entry-level workshops and outreach designed to engage families earlier. Nicole has also committed to offering at least one virtual class per term to support a consistent year-round schedule across age groups.

Council members raised concerns about the accessibility of the PSN class calendar, noting that families and providers have had difficulty locating available programming across age groups. Jessica confirmed that the PSN website calendar has been updated with all submitted partner flyers, including those for summer programming, and that it has been shared with the Council. The Council emphasized that the PSN calendar should serve as the primary regional hub for parent education beyond early childhood, helping to centralize information, reduce duplication, and avoid scheduling conflicts, including for culturally specific offerings such as Spanish-language parenting series.

The Council discussed PSN's broader system role in coordinating regional parent education efforts. Members highlighted two key functions: supporting consistent facilitator capacity across partners and reducing stigma by positioning parenting education as a standard form of family support rather than a crisis response. Core partners, including Strengthening Rural Families, Jackson Street, Young Roots, Samaritan Health Services, local faith organizations, Linn County Alcohol and Drug programs, and juvenile departments, continue to provide specialized programming for distinct populations, such as families affected by substance use.

The PSN Steering Committee will reconvene to further refine fall term scheduling and class offerings based on family and partner feedback.

Next Meeting	2:00 pm, August 6, 2026 Online via Zoom
Meeting Adjourned	3:59 pm

Discussion Items

Strategic Investment Recommendations

View the 2026 Regional Strategic Investment Recommendation at

<https://lblearlylearninghub.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/07/Draft-2026-Regional-Investment-Recommendations-Report.pdf>

PSN Transition

No handouts for this item.

Council Member Website Photo & Bio

You can view your listing on the website at: <https://lblearlylearninghub.org/team/>

Informational Items

To prioritize meeting time for items that need action or feedback, informational items will be included in the Council packet but not presented during the meeting.

Workgroup Meeting Minutes

Health Care Integration

Early Learning Hub of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties

Health Care Integration Work Group Meeting Minutes

MEETING COMMENCED	9:30 am, July 14, 2026 Online Via Zoom
MEETING CALLED BY	Ashley Vermillion
PRESENTERS	Chelsea Chytka, Benton County Emergency Management Coordinator
WORKGROUP MEMBERS PRESENT	Amy Bliege, Monica Boylan, Ash Gladstone, Erin Sedlack, Paul Smith
STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT	Matt Grams, Antonia Huerta, Jinguang Lin, Sam Rounsavell, Carmen Santacruz
RECORDED	Yes

Agenda Topics

Discussion Item	Welcome and Introductions
Workgroup members introduced themselves.	

Special Presentation	Chelsea Chytka, Benton County Emergency Management Coordinator
Chelsea Chytka, Emergency Management Coordinator for Benton County Emergency Management (BCEM), gave an overview of the agency's structure and core initiatives. BCEM operates under the Benton County Sheriff's Office, led by Emergency Manager Brian Lee. Under Oregon Statute 401, counties are mandated to maintain emergency management services. Chelsea highlighted the agency's emphasis on building community relationships during "blue sky days" so that partnerships are already established before "dark sky days" (disasters) occur. BCEM focuses heavily on making plans actionable blueprints rather than idle binders, ensuring that roles, equipment, training, and exercises are fully coordinated before an incident. The agency actively plans for diverse local hazards, including wildfires, severe winter storms, floods, and the long-term threat of a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake. To support response operations, BCEM is currently constructing a new Emergency Operations Center (EOC) off Highway 20 to house its Type 3 multi-hazard Incident Management Team. The team coordinates county, city, and partner agency resources during major events and hosts monthly tabletop and full-scale exercises. Chelsea extended an open invitation to community partner organizations to participate in these regular training sessions. She addressed the stark realities of post-disaster recovery, particularly after a major Cascadia event, in which restoring critical services such as electricity, water, and highways could take months. She emphasized the importance of managing public expectations, noting that local government resources must prioritize life-safety emergencies over door-to-door checks or immediate household deliveries. Consequently, individual and community self-sufficiency is vital, particularly during the first 72 hours of an emergency. To help residents prepare, BCEM promotes several resources:	

- **Be 2 Weeks Ready:** A highly adaptable Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM) program designed to help families incrementally build two weeks of emergency supplies.
- **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT):** A hybrid training program consisting of 12 hours of online learning and 16 hours of in-person, hands-on disaster simulation, covering basic first aid, triage, light search and rescue, and fire suppression.
- **Emergency Management Volunteer Corps (EMVC):** A deployable volunteer team trained in mass care, sheltering support, call centers, and pet/livestock coordination.

Residents were also urged to sign up for Linn Benton Alert (and the broader ORAlert system) to receive localized evacuation warnings and safety updates.

The workgroup asked about county-level lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly regarding gaps in communication with community-based organizations (CBOs) and diverse language groups. Chelsea confirmed that while a large, internal After-Action Report (AAR) exists, a dedicated Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) group is the ideal mechanism to bridge these communication gaps. She shared that BCEM is currently exploring the revival of a localized COAD framework to improve future collaborations with non-governmental partners.

It was also suggested that BCEM connect with local Granges as a strategic way to rebuild engagement and distribute emergency preparedness training to rural parts of the county.

Chelsea Chytka noted that multilingual emergency preparedness publications are available for any partner organizations that are interested. Community members and partners are invited to contact her directly to request these materials or to schedule emergency preparedness presentations. She can be reached via email at chelsea.chytka@bentoncountyor.gov or by phone at 541-760-2521.

Discussion Item	Partner Updates
	Monica Boylan gave an update for Linn County Health. Family Connects newborn program is expanding to Lincoln County to absorb their population, with a newly hired nurse having commenced home visits as of July 1. While referral pathways remain the same, other home visiting programs continue as status quo. The Linn County department is pursuing grant opportunities to relaunch the Nurse-Family Partnership, an evidence-based program that supports first-time parents from pregnancy through age 2. Partners are encouraged to refer any pregnant individuals or families in need of support, as they likely qualify for one of the county's various visiting initiatives. The Linn County Public Health team continues to operate out of the 7th Street building alongside WIC. While ongoing construction has limited parking, the project is expected to wrap up soon, significantly improving accessibility for visiting families. Regarding staffing, the department's bilingual nurse is currently on maternity leave. Her caseload is being successfully managed by community health workers, with Carol from Benton County providing nursing coverage one day a week. The community is invited to the annual World Breastfeeding Week event, to be held in the department's parking lot on Saturday, August 1, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Ash Gladstone gave an update for Benton County Health. The Community Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 29, from 12:00 PM to 1:30 PM. The meeting will be held in

a hybrid format, with an in-person option at the Old Mill Center and a virtual option. Partners and community members who are interested in attending but are not currently on the mailing list are encouraged to reach out to Gladstone to be added to receive future updates and access to the link.

Erin Sedlacek gave an update on Samaritan Health & Parenting Education. Samaritan is offering free virtual parenting education classes, including a Spanish-language series launching in August, as well as ongoing weekly prenatal yoga sessions. Additionally, various free health education workshops are underway, such as the upcoming "Living Well with Chronic Conditions" series hosted at the Mennonite Village in Albany.

Discussion Item	Pollywog Update
	Kelly, Family Resource Specialist for the LBL Early Learning Hub and Pollywog, presented a data and resource update covering the period from April through June. During this quarter, Schell connected 198 unique families to essential services across Linn, Benton, and Lincoln counties. The program has seen a massive surge in Health-Related Social Needs (HSRN) requests, particularly concerning housing, climate, and nutrition assistance. Other highly requested resources during this period included rent and utility support, food and clothing, prenatal and parenting classes, and critical infant supplies. Schell also continues to assist families by coordinating connections to preschool programs, childcare, employment resources, family counseling services, and basic hygiene products.
	Sam shared that Pollywog's monthly parent newsletter now reaches over 2,000 families on its mailing list. The July edition, which was sent on July 6th in honor of National Purposeful Parenting Month, focused on practical tips for intentional parenting, including the "six P's" of parenting, essential life skills for children, the "power of repair" (apologizing to children), and local library and parenting resources. She also outlined the editorial calendar for the remainder of the year: • August: "Starting School with Confidence" (preschool and kindergarten prep) • September: Self-care for parents • Fall/Winter: Seasonal resource guides (Halloween & Harvest Guide, followed by Holiday Resources and Winter Holiday guides) Additionally, Pollywog has welcomed two new parent bloggers, Corinne from Lincoln County and Lithia from Linn County.
	Pollywog is active in summer community outreach and will be tabling at several local events. The team is currently participating in Albany's Fun in the Park, held every Wednesday morning throughout July and August. They will also attend the World Breastfeeding Celebration alongside Linn County partners and have been invited to participate in Newport's National Night Out event in August, sponsored by the Newport Police Department. Other local events continue to be updated on Pollywog's online community calendar. Community Events in Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties: https://pollywogfamily.org/communityevents/
	Sam announced that Jessica Morrison has joined the Early Learning Hub team. While Jessica was unable to attend today's meeting, she will be introduced at the next session and will participate in future Hub and Pollywog meetings.

Next Meeting	9:30 am, September 8, 2026 Online Via Zoom
Meeting Adjourned	10:10 am

Program Updates

Business Liaison

Bryan will be available during the meeting if there are questions about this report.

Business Liaison

July 2026 Progress Update

Business Outreach Initiative

- After 2.5 years of development, Starker Forests, Inc. was successfully able to license its on-site Certified Family child care program, in assistance with the Old Mill Center for Children & Families to serve as the implementing partner.
- Through Onward Eugene, along with Holly Mar-Conte and Robin Van Winkle of Douglas ESD, we were awarded a \$249,000 contract by the Dept of Early Learning and Care to build a "Strengthening Business Engagement in Child Care" Toolkit by Dec 30, 2026. The project includes a \$30,000 contracted fee for the Early Learning Hub's role in creating the toolkit. Currently, we are working on developing background information on lessons learned through interviews with those responsible from past projects and community input through a series of statewide focus groups. DELC has shown interest in a continuation of this project for 2027 using future PDG funding.
- Efforts are being made to expand child care capacity building in Toledo, Lincoln County. The goal is to secure funding and property necessary for a local child care program to expand and create a new Certified Child Care Center. The current focus is to facilitate the creation of a local child care coalition involving key members of regional community partners.
- We were invited to speak at a breakout session on employer engagement at the 2026 Oregon Economic Development Association to be held in Salem in October 2026. Attendees will be representatives from city, county, and state economic development, regional workforce boards, OBI, elected officials, and others. The presentation will be performed by Holly Mar-Conte of Onward Eugene and me and will be a "Train the Trainer" style seminar to help those attending build child care coalitions and create projects from their positions.
- Continued collaborative efforts are being made with Western University of Health Sciences, H-COM (formerly COMP-NW) in Lebanon. We are assisting them with surveys and other research to encourage their administration and board to approve plans to include an on-site child care center as they build additional medical school campuses in Lebanon.

Growing Care

- Completion of the Summer 2026 marketing campaign, which lasted 11 weeks and distributed 1.1 million ad impressions,
- Hindered by 2026 nationwide budgetary issues, so far we have been unsuccessful in securing any future funding for financial assistance to support newly licensed providers in the upcoming fiscal year. That required the removal of financial assistance as a marketing incentive to recruit new providers.
- Also due to 2026 budgetary issues, previously planned efforts to get other CCR&Rs around the state to adopt Growing Care have been indefinitely delayed until circumstances are more favorable.