

Early Learning Hub of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties

P-3 Alignment & Early Childhood Coordinating Council Meeting Minutes

MEETING COMMENCED	9:30 am, August 19, 2026 Online via Zoom
PRESENTERS	None
WORKGROUP MEMBERS PRESENT	Donna Brown, Susan Halliday, Nicole Kalita, Stephany Koehne, Andrea Lengel, Catie Rakow, Paul Smith, Diane Wilkinson, Lynnette Wynkoop,
STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT	Kristi Collins, Matt Grams, Jessica Morrison, Sam Rounsavell, , Carmen Santacruz, Kelly Schell
RECORDED	Yes

P-3 Alignment Agenda topics

DISCUSSION ITEM	KPI Updates
The meeting focused on setting the fall schedule for KPI presentations and addressing early learning funding strategies across school districts. Members will take turns providing the presentations starting monthly in October. The KPI presenters for October and November meetings were chosen. Another member was asked to share these updates during a superintendents' meeting on 9/18 while gathering clearer information on district-level funding usage. Driven by interest among local superintendents regarding Preschool Promise and establishing district-led early learning programs, Kristi is working to schedule a group discussion at an upcoming superintendents' meeting (possibly 9/18 or 10/8–9). This approach will enable districts to share best practices, funding models, and program structures collectively rather than through individual one-on-one sessions. The group agreed to record the sessions so the Governance Council can evaluate the direct outcomes of their funding allocations and offer guidance to struggling districts. The team also discussed expanding the presentations to include information on Preschool Promise, and noted that doing so would give districts a clear picture of how to combine funding sources and structure early childhood services effectively. It was noted that school district partners can share valuable insights—including classroom size limits and implementation trade-offs—to help interested superintendents determine the best early learning models for their communities.	

DISCUSSION ITEM	KPI Funds
Kristi confirmed that the new one-year contracting model is effectively managing fund distribution. Approximately \$33,000 in unspent funds from 11 districts will be pooled and reallocated to districts actively expending their awards. The Governance Council will meet soon to decide whether these redistributed funds will go exclusively to districts that fully spent their initial allocations or to a broader group of active partners.	

In response to a query, Kristi confirmed that state contracts will transition to a July 1 - June 30 schedule following the current biennium. Kristi also noted potential challenges around managing summer funding during transition years, particularly because the team will need to operate on estimated rather than final funding allocations.

DISCUSSION ITEM	PK-3 Plan & Funding Alignment – Susan Halliday
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Information is still being gathered, though efforts are in progress to map out regional school district investments in early learning. While districts have identified their designated contacts for early literacy, detailed information on actual spending and program implementation remains limited. The primary focus moving forward is to analyze how districts are spending their early literacy and summer funds in relation to KPI funding, verifying whether activities align with original proposals and identifying opportunities to streamline these connected funding streams.

P-3 Alignment & Early Childhood Coordinating Council Agenda topics

DISCUSSION ITEM	Professional Development Calendar – Lynnette Wynkoop
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The new regional Professional Development Calendar was presented, hosted on the Early Learning Hub website. Designed to connect early childhood educators and K-12 professionals with local training opportunities, the portal bridges the gap between general education professional development and existing statewide ECE calendars.

The committee was provided with a walkthrough of the calendar's features, demonstrating how to submit events, attach flyers, and pull events directly from Facebook. The interface supports agenda and monthly views, along with tagging and searching for specific criteria like county or specific developmental topic. In response to a query regarding Preschool Promise training, the team noted that relevant sessions can be searched easily once submitted. Lynnette concluded by committing to work with the Community Inclusion team to ensure their ongoing training schedules are routinely added to the shared platform.

<https://lblearlylearninghub.org/pd-calendar/>

DISCUSSION ITEM	Every Child Belongs - Lynnette Wynkoop
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An update was provided on the September 1st implementation of new DELC regulations. To assist providers and families, DELC is offering technical assistance, FAQs, and informational sessions on policy development and mental health consultation. Additionally, the initiative's Advisory Council is working to expand the online portal, enabling families to directly request support when navigating challenging placement or transition decisions for their children.

The discussion also clarified service boundaries and administrative requirements for school districts. Addressing administrative burdens, a member noted that providing feedback helped adjust the overly complex behavioral reporting expectations for OPK and district programs.

Every Child Belongs Resources and FAQ: <https://everychildbelongs.org/resources/>
<https://everychildbelongs.org/frequently-asked-questions/>

DISCUSSION ITEM	Early Literacy Funds – Kristi Collins
Kristi Collins presented an overview of remaining Birth to Five Literacy funds, noting that \$42,000 remains unallocated through June 30, 2027. The committee discussed the most effective, efficient way to deploy these funds into the community without requiring programs to build entirely new initiatives from scratch. A member explained that state literacy funding streams originally bypassed Preschool Promise programs, which missed out on the extra resources provided to traditional home-visiting models like OPK, Healthy Families, and Relief Nursery. The group agreed that directing grants toward Preschool Promise classrooms is an ideal solution. It builds on existing Early Learning Hub relationships, ensures funding reaches priority low-income populations, and can be integrated into existing family engagement events, book distributions, or hands-on literacy projects. Another member suggested referencing ongoing K-12 science of reading and writing initiatives during upcoming meetings to explore broader collaboration. The team was reminded to evaluate distributions through the board's strategic investment framework, which Kristi affirmed aligns naturally with Preschool Promise guidelines. Eligible providers can utilize First Book accounts for discounted, high-quality materials, confirming that the Hub can help program leaders complete the simple scope-of-work documentation. The formal recommendation will go before the Governance Council at the September meeting.	

DISCUSSION ITEM	Coordinated Enrollment – Kristi Collins
Preschool Promise enrollment is currently over 95% full ahead of the upcoming school year. Out of 298 total slots, only 13 remain open across Linn, Benton, and Lincoln counties. A key success in filling local capacity was securing a rural waiver (formerly FAR waiver) for the new program at Lacombe Elementary. This waiver allows families residing within the Lacombe and Hamilton Creek elementary school attendance boundaries to participate even if their income slightly exceeds traditional Preschool Promise limits, expanding access in a rural area with limited local options. Looking ahead to early-fall adjustments, the team has strengthened cross-agency collaboration with Head Start and OPK through a shared waitlist tracking system. Established under a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), this system flags duplicate applications early, ensuring smoother placement for families and clearer roster visibility for providers.	

DISCUSSION ITEM	Federal Policy Updates - Stephany Koehne
An update on a federal Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) was published on August 7th that proposes significant structural modifications to the Head Start Program Performance Standards. While marketed as an effort to increase local flexibility and save \$236 million, the proposed changes would remove long-standing federal mandates for mental health consultation, staff coaching, staff education requirements, bus monitors, dual-language instruction, and direct provision of diapers and formula. The rules would also institute a strict 5% cap on administrative reimbursements, which panel members noted is unworkable for most multi-service community agencies and university-sponsored Head Starts without waivers. The meeting participants discussed potential motives and long-term implications. While certain administrative relaxations—such as removing strict 45-day screening deadlines—are welcomed by directors, members shared concerns that removing core quality metrics could undermine the program overall or signal a broader push toward state block grants. Because Oregon enforces strict state childcare licensing laws, local operations will retain fundamental safety standards and staffing ratios. State early learning leaders are actively analyzing how these proposed federal changes will affect OPK guidelines, which currently mirror federal Head Start standards. Stakeholders are encouraged to submit targeted public comments before the October 6 deadline. Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (link to public comment is at the bottom of the webpage): https://headstart.gov/about-us/article/notice-proposed-rulemaking-reducing-federal-burden-head-start-programs	

NEXT MEETING	9:30 am, September 16, 2026 Online via Zoom
MEETING ADJOURNED	10:30 a.m.