



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Home and Family Life Building, Room 129
November 9, 2023 from 5 - 6:30 p.m.

I. CALL TO ORDER - 5:15 p.m.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

A. Present:

1. Jesse Watson (Chair), Sub at ELC
2. Sue Akins-fields LCC ECE instructor
3. Tamra Gilchrist, LCC Dean of Instruction
4. Michaela Jackson, Director, LCC BAS Programs
5. Nickie Hemberry, Smart Start Early Learning Center
6. Kari Johnson, Director of LCC Early Learning Center
7. Sara Hegnes, Wee Care Daycare
8. Ashleigh Kruckenberg, LCC Education Faculty

B. Virtual

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- A. November 29, 2022 - Kari Johnson Motion to approve, Jesse Watson 2nd – Approved
- B. May 11, 2023 -Jesse Watson Motion to approve, Sara Hegnes 2nd – Approved
- C. Approved

IV. INDUSTRY UPDATES

A. What new initiatives are you hearing about?

1. TK has impacted enrollment. Some kids will come back after school. That changes ratios in the van. There has been a learning curve.
2. Kelso started TK in mid-October. If there are spots, the schools fill them on an ongoing basis.
3. The need for toddlers is huge. There is not enough space for infants and toddlers. Waitlists are solid at all age groups. Vancouver site is almost always full, but that isn't the case for all pre-k sites.
4. It's challenging to fill a spot that empties in mid-year. Some require a 60-day requirement for continued payment. That doesn't work when there are state subsidies though.

5. The covid learning gap is appearing to close a bit. Some of the parents are sticking around a bit more to play, and the families are more engaged now that the 6 ft restrictions have shifted away.
6. Benchmarks are lower for developmental - some natural things like going to the grocery store with their parents, like how to wait, created natural stamina, and it doesn't appear to be coming back.
7. There is no patience/waiting at this point, and teaching that is a challenge.
8. Some mock life events are helping students become adaptable.
9. Tactile toys are becoming popular, but some of the outdated entertainment is still available too.
10. Private kindergartens and private schools are quite popular. Public schools are less desirable. Post covid there has been a huge uptick. Homeschooling has been that way as well.

B. How can LCC help?

V. **UPDATES** (LCC and K12)

A. Student Success/Performance

1. Michaela Jackson, Enrollment

- i. There were 12 grads in June. We will have more completers this year.
- ii. We have discussed fully online programs. If there is demand, we will bring our services to your staff (staff meetings, informal info sessions, enrollment fairs at your establishment - even if it is 10 minutes). We could even do mini topics in self-help.

2. Sue Akins-Fields:

- i. DEI course descriptions and outcomes have been added
- ii. 2022/2023 there has been a 30% increase.
- iii. Students often prefer in person courses.
- iv. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Common Core classes are currently doing a book read.
- v. There is an overwhelming lack of funds to get students through school.

B. K12 Updates

1. Program Space? Several ECE staff indicated that they can't take classes because classes are full. They are not checking LCC.
 - i. Our ECE degree will be fully online as soon as math has been approved.
 - ii. We rotate online and in-person options so campus courses are available some terms, and online is available some terms.

C. LCC Updates

1. Tamra Gilchrist, Dean - Labor Market Report

- i. Feedback and input requested: Review for accuracy
- ii. ECE in WA state, Cowlitz County, and Wahkiakum were presented.

- iii. It may not be entirely accurate. Wages for ECE follow the minimum wage standards regardless of the education required.
 - iv. Different states offer different incentives to retain talent: What are we doing?
 - v. Sara: The wage ladder, with increases in wages based on academic attendance with Early Achievers, has helped. WA state doesn't use all funding that is allocated to them, but they have to apply for the FAFSA/WASFA.
 - vi. In 2026 academic training will be mandatory. Full schools are typically online. Many colleges are already waitlisted.
 - vii. Building some grit back into the students helps, and if one attends an institution, others will follow.
 - viii. Private schools don't have \$ like public institutions do. Many of the lead teachers already have 4-year degrees, but they would prefer to work while kids are in school. That is the primary incentive in private schools. A flexible work environment is an incentive.
 - ix. Part-time jobs have gone full-time, which makes it difficult to employ part-time. Staff is worth far more than what they get paid.
 - x. 2 years ago, state rates were above private pay rates.
 - xi. Wage ranges on the presented material appear correct.
 - xii. Trends appear to be rebounding a bit faster than anticipated.
 - xiii. Job opening statistics do not appear to be accurate. But that could be because one job post brings in the 6 candidates that are needed.
 - xiv. Growth appears low, but job openings appear to be robust. Data is often a couple of years behind the current trends.
 - xv. Internal movement also creates new openings as well as students needing to focus on school.
2. Jenny Smith, Online Ethics training: <https://lowercolumbia.edu/advisory/> under "How to Join"
 3. Sue Akins-Fields: Resources being addressed
 - i. Many schools lost FTEs for Early Achievers grants.
 - ii. We have been encouraging ibest support.
 - iii. If assignments are missing, extra time and assignments can be opened to ensure equity is extended.
 - iv. Videotaping observations are not being dismissed due to potential distance student attendance, but in-person is still preferred.
 - v. ECE 132 Infant/Toddler is being offered in winter.
 - vi. For those students who are having a hard time, college and career prep is being recommended, and there is still math resistance.
 - vii. Education is the second largest degree program at LCC and it is still robust.

4. Job opening: We are looking for a bilingual ECE/Outreach contact. It will be around 10 hours per month if you know of someone interested.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

- A. Woodland apprenticeship updates - Para tracks 1 and 2 are established. We have added para track 3. The Woodland para contract is part of their collective bargaining agreement and their paras can come to school and get education for free. We are the only college that has track 3 in the state, and we are one of the few with the apprenticeship. PESB is interested in the model.
- B. CTE: Cascadia Tech opened an Education Satellite campus and they are offering courses related to our para degree for HS aged students.
- C. College credits in HS are available in both Kelso and through Cascadia Tech
- D. We also have CTE Kelso Skill Center for machining, diesel, welding, and possibly education next year. We provide the instruction and the hs gets the training.

VII. UPCOMING PROGRAM OR COMMUNITY EVENTS

- A. Education Career Fair - Tuesday, March 5, 2024, from 2 - 5 p.m. - Ashley Cahill

VIII. NEXT MEETING (DATE/TIME/PLACE):

- A. Thursday, February 8, 2024, from 5 - 6:30 p.m. (HOFL 129 will be requested) unless 7 am is available
- B. Please invite colleagues to participate in the advisory.

IX. ADJOURNED: 6:25 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Seeking a licenser for this board: Murphy or Irene

PREPARED BY: Jenny Smith