



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

TUESDAY, NOV. 24TH, 2020, 5 p.m. VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

I. Meeting called to order at 5 p.m.

II. ATTENDEES

Sara Hegnes, Wee Care Day Care

Carmen McClain, Educational Service District 112/Child Care Aware

Nikki Hemberry, Smart Start Early Learning Center

Stephanie Patterson, Apprenticeship Coordinator, Labor and Industries

Megan Lamb, Kelso High School

Michelle Mahitka, Kelso High School

Ann Williamson, LCC

Josie Zbaeren, LCC

Lynell Amundson, LCC

III. AGENDA ITEMS

a) Updates from LCC

Josie Zbaeren shared with board members that Early Childhood Education (ECED) enrollment is doing well. Classes are being offered in block scheduling Mondays and Wednesdays. Students have been placed in early learning centers, some at Head Start, some at Wee Care Day Care. Faculty have not been able to observe student progress due to COVID-19 so directors at the early learning centers have filled that role.

Josie added that staff and faculty were able to bring students back to campus for face-to-face learning in a larger classroom with two options for continuing their education during the COVID-19 pandemic. The first (Option A) includes six hours a week in the classroom. If they display any COVID-like symptoms they are required to step out and continue participating in the second option (Option B) which is offered completely online. Content is similar in both though the Option B requires more reading and writing.

Sara Hegnes asked about student's ability to switch between the two options. Josie affirmed that it is allowed. Most students she added have chosen Option A unless something comes up requiring them to quarantine.

Ann Williamson shared information about the Early Achiever Grant, a state grant awarded to individual colleges. LCC currently has over 50 students covered by this grant and is considering hiring a co-point of contact that is bilingual to reach additional potential students and teachers. The hope is to have this position on board or posted by Summer 2021. She encouraged board members to encourage people to apply for the grant.



Ann also shared that funding for para educator and childcare basics courses have been offered through Continuing Education (CE) to increase opportunity for students to complete the required 30 hours of training within the first three months of being hired. This option was pursued to enable students that got hired mid-quarter to complete the training requirement of their new job. The course continues to be offered for credit but is also continuing to be offered through CE for rolling enrollment.

Dr. Sara Paul and her staff are teaching the Para Ed Fundamental Course of Study.

Ann also shared that LCC is purchasing SWIVL's, a technology that allows LCC faculty to observe students in the classroom. This technology can be used for both ECED and LCC's Bachelor of Applied Science – Teacher Education. This is another way LCC is looking to technology to work through the restrictions due to COVID-19.

Ann told advisory members that the first co-hort of students in LCC's BAS-TE are set to graduate Spring 2021. There may not be an in-person commencement due to COVID but that decision has not yet been made.

She added that many colleges with teacher education programs were hit with schools closing their doors to student teachers. LCC students invested the time in researching best practices for virtual learner which gave them an advantage and presented them as an asset to the districts. All LCC students are placed.

LCC has memorandum of agreements in place with all seven districts in its service area as well as agreements with private schools and articulations with districts outside of LCC's service area.

The BAS-TE second cohort lost students and is currently down to 24, Ann told the group. Some left due to job loss, one did not believe the learning environment completely online would work for her and plans to return Fall 2021. LCC is looking for options to help students become certificated.

The third BAS-TE cohort application went out December 2020 with a mid-April deadline. This full-time cohort will start Fall 2021.

Ann added that some of the curriculum was changed. The fundamentals course is being offered early on to talk about roles and responsibilities and professional communication prior to working within the schools. LCC also changed ECED curriculum by combining some classes into a single class with a Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM) focus to reduce the number of courses required to finish the degree within two years. This new combined course is an interdisciplinary course offered for 5 credits. It keeps the program current and relevant and allows students to graduate within two years.

b) Proposed amendment to WAC 110-300-0100

Sara Hegnes shared that WAC 110-300 extends the timeline for early learning program teachers and administrators to complete their education to 2026. She added that she sees many staff waiting to pursue their education to meet the deadline especially with this extension.

She added that the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) are proposing early learning centers be required to have Professional Development Plans (PDP) in



place for employees and document annually what staff are working on. This may encourage individuals to work toward completing their education.

DCYF oversees child and family services, including early learning licensing.

Ann asked if there is a template for PDP. Sara said the template is in the preliminary stages of development. Carmen McClain added that DCYF has a YouTube channel and web site with recordings, information about expectations, forms, templates, etc. The PDP is expected to launch/go live July 2021. Ann requested a link to share with students for professional development purposes and to introduce students to expectations once the PDP is live.

Josie and Ann offered to speak to early learning center staff about education options. Ann also mentioned the opportunity to offer a class to co-horts of 15 to early learning staff through CE.

c) Birth-12th grade partner updates

Career and Technical Education courses require approval every 5 years. Kelso High School has two courses that need Early Childhood Education Advisory Board approval. An occupational analysis was pulled for the positions of Preschool/Childcare Teacher and Teacher Assistant for Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, Lewis and Clark counties from Labor Insight, a labor market research firm. There were 151 postings in the past 12 months for Childcare Teacher and 186 for Teacher Assistant with projected growth of +17.2 and +18.3 respectively.

Kelso High teacher Megan Lamb explained the course content.

The first course with CIP Code 190706 - Child Development focuses on understanding functions and dynamics of families, how children grow and learn. The course begins with conception and attempts to cover through age 8. Due to Kelso's trimester system (60 hours) it is often difficult to completely cover the age range.

The second course, CIP Code 130101 - Early Childhood Education, focuses on what students would have to know - knowledge, skill and practice - for working with young children.

Michelle Mahitka will be teaching these courses Spring 2021.

Megan shared with the group that KHS has articulation agreements in place with LCC classes EDUC& 115 Child Development and ECED& 105 Introduction to Early Childhood Education. Students completing the coursework at Kelso with a grade of B or better receive college credits.

Stephanie Patterson questioned whether the para ed fundamentals course of study would be of value to the program. Ann added that the course is 28 hours and is an employment requirement. Information was also discussed about the development of a pre-apprentice program in partnership with Washington Public School Employees that would then feed into LCC's Early Childhood Education Degree and potentially into the BAS-TE.

Stephanie expressed support of Kelso's courses and the potential for additional pathways into a career in education. Sara also expressed approval and shared that Wee



Care Day Care hosted high school students who loved working in the field and then went on to get their early childhood education degrees.

Megan suggested having Ann or Josie come in and talk to students about career options, either in person when allowed or potentially as a virtual online session.

Carmen moved to approve the two courses. Stephanie seconded.

d) Industry partner updates

Sara shared that Wee Care remained open through the COVID pandemic, learning to adapt and remain flexible to support children and their families. They have had 20 school age children, different ages, different grades, different schools, and they found methods for serving students.

Stephanie shared with the group that she had been at Woodland Public Schools working with apprentices and representing the school on the Washington Public Employees Joint Apprenticeship Committee. She has now moved into a role as an apprenticeship planner with Washington Labor and Industries. She shared additional information about Woodland's pre-apprentice in early childhood education and a pathway to LCC's two-year degree and possibly into the BAS-TE.

Nikki Hemberry with Smart Start Early Learning Center expressed thanks to Sara and other education partners for their support and guidance. She has relied on their input to manage during these difficult times. She added that one of the positive aspects of requirements of returning to business during COVID is the one-on-one contact with children. As they come into the center they are individually checked and this gives teachers the chance to really spend a few minutes with each child.

Josie gave a big shout out and thank you to childcare centers for their support of LCC.

e) LCC updates and next steps

Plans for Winter Quarter 2021

Josie and Ann shared that winter quarter remains mostly online with the first two weeks delivered completely online.

IV. PROGRAM OR COMMUNITY EVENTS

Sara shared that plans are underway to recognize the Week of the Young Child, typically occurs the second week of April. It was offered in 2017, 2018 and 2019 to recognize and celebrate early learning teachers and to share information about services in the community. The event was cancelled in 2020 but the Early Learning Coalition has created a subcommittee working to find a way to celebrate young children and early learning teachers in 2021.

V. Meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.