PHT Meeting Minutes
May 2, 2024, 8:30-10:30 am
Skagit Station Meeting Room

Members: Claudia Avendaño-Ibarra, Dan Berard, Thomas Boucher, Patty Codd, Bill Henkel, Leon John, Chris Johnston, Linden Jordan, Maddy Mackenzie, Julie Merriam, Kevin Murphy, Lilia Ortiz, Mario Paredes, Maureen Pettitt, Lyndie Simmonds, Dean Snider, Annaliese Vance-Sherman

Community Stakeholders: KaSandra Church, Polly Dubbel, Kristen Ekstran, Keith Higman, Jennifer Sass-Walton

Ex-Officio: Peter Browning, Howard Leibrand

Guests: Lani Miller, David Webster, Sandra Lopez Rodriguez, Laurie Saling, Kenda Sipma,

Welcome/Agenda Review/Steering Report
Kristen welcomed everyone, then turned things over to Vice-Chair, Bill Henkel. Bill reviewed the day's agenda and provided updates from the last Steering Committee meeting.

ARPA update: Child Care Q&A
Kristen welcomed the Center for Retention and Expansion of Child Care-NW (C-RECC) to present on their work, especially as it relates to Trust initiatives funded with American Recovery Plan Act (ARPA funding). Kenda Sipma, Manager of C-RECC introduced the team, David Webster, Director of Early Learning and Family Services, Laurie Saling, Assistant Director of Quality Child Care, and Sandra Lopez Rodriguez, CC Marketing and Recruitment Coordinator.

C-RECC was created in 2020 through a partnership between the Opportunity Council and the Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce. Their focus is to retain and expand child care throughout the five-county region of Whatcom, Skagit, Snohomish, San Juan, and Island.

Sandra shared more about C-RECC's goals for Skagit, which include:
- Grow overall child care capacity in Skagit County
- Increase high-quality child care accessibility for low-income, underserved/rural communities and Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) families
- Create entrepreneurship opportunities for women with an emphasis on BIPOC women
- Support employers with child care solutions for their workforce; create a Skagit Employer-Based Child Care Pilot Project.

Sandra also provided specific examples of how C-RECC has collaborated with local providers to support the expansion of child care in Skagit.

Laurie shared about the advocacy work happening through Child Care Aware (CCA) of NW Washington. Many early learning organizations are currently united around the issues of the high cost of care for families and ensuring that child care professionals receive a living wage and other employment benefits. Laurie invited everyone to join their CCA advocacy work as they continue to raise awareness and ask for support from the legislature.

David wrapped the presentation by thanking Skagit County Commissioners, as well as the many individuals and organizations, who have supported these local initiatives and helped to expand child care in Skagit. There was a short question and answer period following the presentation.

Planning for Powerful Partnerships
Kristen provided an overview of the Powerful Partnerships event scheduled for October 4, 2024. She shared highlights from and goals for the event from past years.

Members were invited to share their ideas for this year's event through an activity. Each person received a set of note cards and was asked to write down 3-5 thoughts in response to the question below.

What would you most like participants to understand and experience by attending Powerful Partnerships?

Once members had recorded their thoughts, Kristen led the group in a share out, each member sharing an idea per round for a total of three rounds. Trust members generated many ideas in response to the question, some related to values and others to content for the event.

Kristen and Kas sorted the responses into three categories: values, content, and general trust work. The ideas will be shared with Steering at their next meeting.

Meeting Adjourned:
Kristen reminded the group of future meeting times and topics. She then thanked them for their time and adjourned the meeting.