



Education – Meeting Notes

Thursday, November 16, 2023 | 4:00 – 6:00 PM | In-Person

In-Person: Sunriver, SHARC - 57250 Overlook Rd, Sunriver, OR 97707

AGENDA

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| 4:00 – 4:30 | A. Community Meal <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Catered by Josie K's Deli |
| 4:30 – 4:35 | B. Meeting Begins <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introductions• Moderator: Kathy DeBone & Angela Groves |
| 4:35 – 4:45 | C. Purpose & Survey Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who are We?<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Newberry Regional Partnership – a team of public and private citizens who have come together to develop a long-range plan for growth in South Deschutes County○ Project Goal: collaborative organization of community leaders engaged in planning for and dealing with changes associated with growth in the future.• Purpose<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Address the effects of growth in Newberry Country (South Deschutes, North Klamath, West Lake Counties)○ Serve as facilitators for collaborative, community-led development.○ Create a Community Strategic Action Plan• Today's Purpose<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Engaging community discussion on matter of interest and/or concern○ Candid conversations welcome○ Bring forth issues, problems, challenges, successes, opportunities, and ideas for action to address today's topic.• Survey Overview<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Total study population: 16,800 in 97739 and 97707 zip codes |

- Sought to collect information on community priority issues and values.
- Biggest Concerns from Survey:
 - Growth & Change
 - Public Safety – wildfire, homelessness, drug use & crime
 - Recreational opportunities & family friendly activities
 - Social divisions in the community
 - Quality of public education
 - Lack of local restaurants, shops, and competitive grocery stores
 - Access to healthcare and 24/7 emergency care
- Important Results
 - 44% of respondents were very or somewhat satisfied with the quality of public education.
 - 52% of respondents were very or somewhat concerned with access to higher education.
 - 4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate for 2021-22
 - La Pine Senior High: 59.2%

4:45 – 5:05

D. Panelist Presentation

Bridgit Montgomery – La Pine High School, ASPIRE

- School to Careers, supports to help students get jobs. Careers (long term) vs. jobs (short term)

Valerie Stensland – South County Collaborative and Sunriver Women’s Club

- SMART Coordinator for Rosland Elementary
- Sunriver Women’s Club helped fund South County Collaborative
- South County Collaborative – group of agencies who have come together to find solutions and support students.
 - Mentorship, youth led activities, out of school activities/school clubs, parent engagement.

Scott Olszewski – Principal, La Pine High School & South County Director for Bend-La Pine School District

- Calls South County home
- Has no district admin aspirations, he is a school administrator and he plans to stay in this role.

Erin Foote Morgan – Board of Directors, Central Oregon Community College

- Represents Zone 7, South Deschutes County and North Lake
- Not as large of a footprint from COCC as they would like, looking to identify where they can fill gaps and serve regional needs.
- Show the value of higher education to the community.

Shirley Olson – Board Member, Bend-La Pine School District

- Elected year and a half ago, representing Zone 7 – South Deschutes County

5:05 – 6:00

E. Group Discussion

- Community Members introduced themselves.
- Group activity – participants wrote on sticky notes about Challenges, Opportunities, Successes, and Ideas for Action concerning the topic “Education.”
- Participants also asked questions of the panel and took part in large group discussion.

Challenges:

- Communication – lacking internet, people don’t read newspapers, check email, etc.
- Retention rates of quality educators and support personnel. Students consistently are abandoned by caring teachers/staff because of lack of incentive and support for teachers.
- COCC lacking presence in South County
- Poverty, mental health concerns, childcare (own kids, siblings), working (need to or want to), transportation, divisive public discord.
- Tech/internet access
- Staffing – harder keeping staff as move is expected and less appreciated
- Increase graduation rates – multifaceted issue, need to fill the gaps.

Successes:

- Family Engagement Specialist at La Pine K-12
- Library engagement, Erin Heyl’s programs
- 2 Full Time Counselors funded by the district at La Pine High
- Full Time Alternative Education teacher at LPHS
- LPHS & Middle School Night Hawks Program

Opportunities:

- Plug and Play – STEAM after school programming.
- Future 2030 COCC bond measure to expand facilities and programs in South Deschutes County.
- Homeschool services/resources
- Preschool access – what can the community do to provide educational activities and supports (free or low cost)?
- COCC funded computer lab at LPRD – opportunity to improve visibility.

Ideas for Action

- Parent Meetings, parent education classes, PTA? Before students enter kindergarten.
- Electronic reader board, near HWY 97 or Day Rd
- Onesies or shirts with graduation dates given to children when they’re born. Connection with healthcare.

- DHS Resource Board at the Self-Sufficiency office. Bring in your flyers!
- Morning version of Night Hawks for families who work early, share vehicles, etc.
- La Pine/Sunriver scholarships for COCC & OSU-Cascades from a foundation or business.
- Employer sponsored higher education with COCC
- On site preschool program/CTE combo

General Questions:

We have seen the Bend-La Pine school district invest a lot of money in building Caldera High School and Bend High improvements. Is there any money on the table to be invested in La Pine Schools? Students feel better when they feel like their community wants to invest in them.

- Scott O: Money set aside for master planning; priorities already set aside for the Bond. What they wanted was a CTE expansion and improvements to Physical Education facilities, not what they ended up with. Large capital project done, instead of multi-purpose room paid for a room divider, mat hoist for wrestling, technology upgrades that essentially created a multi-purpose room.
- How does La Pine get in line? Lots of squeaky wheels speaking to district leaders to elevate needs. Utilize partnerships as well.

Money was put into the library in La Pine and Sunriver, what cooperation is present between the library and the school system?

- Youth Services Supervisor for Deschutes County: Erin Heyl has worked closely with community. Library is dedicated to work in partnerships with school:
 - After school programming, early release Wednesday activities
 - Working with kids any day of the week to provide with extra educational opportunities and activities.
 - Always more to be done, open to any ideas and programs that are within their capacity.
 - Part of the purpose of the library expansions was to build more gathering rooms both large and small (tutoring, community groups, etc.)
- Many families won't come to the school, intimidated, bad past experiences. So Library is an option for more off campus opportunities and engagement. Want to make sure everyone feels like they have a space.
- It's not just a library anymore, can rent kitchen items to try, book club kits, more wrap around resources than what we think of with a typical library. Children's area, hands on, multidimensional, computer and technical support.
- Erin also does several class visits/week, put on Harvest Resource fair at the elementary school.

Address the elephant in the room – graduation rates. Why are they so low? What are the barriers that are in the way of students graduating and what was the previous baseline?

- Has been 59% for the past two years, the school will own it, but is not entirely accurate. Part of the problem is not accurately tracking where students transfer too. Had turnover

in the role that would normally oversee this, this role is already very busy with other work. Better support from school districts on training for this work.

- Scott feels confident as of today that the graduation rates from this past year will be much higher, will be posted in January.
- Even the baseline of around 70% is still a concern and need build from there.
- 100-135 students in a class, about a percentage point per student.
- GEDs are also completed within 5 years.
- Staff contact students mid-year and help navigate pathways to graduation, especially for students who are very close to graduating. Do 1 on 1s with every senior in the fall and spring, will be starting them with sophomores as well.
- Many different factors go into calculating a graduation rate.
- Factors affecting graduation and educational success happen well before 9th grade. We need to step in as a community earlier, get clarity on the data for what barriers and problems youth and families face.

From a higher education perspective – do students who aren't graduating not see opportunities after school? From jobs to vocational training to college options, they need something worth graduating for.

- COCC does not have a presence in South County. Any student who graduates high school and goes to school within 6 months of graduation is eligible for Oregon Promise which makes community college in Oregon practically free for up to 90 credits (transfer degrees). The program is based on State budget, everyone that has applied has been granted it, \$28K or less could get Oregon Promise (last two years EVERYONE is eligible), this isn't known until June and eligible income levels can be dropped, meaning students lose the Oregon Promise grant.
- COCC presence in La Pine would mean it's visible to students, teachers are teaching college courses at the high school.
- College going culture, larger community value.

What can COCC do to increase their presence in South County? Adult education program at La Pine Park and Rec have been great in the past but not consistent.

- Community Education programs, available to everyone in the community, youth programs.
- How to help students move on to a different phase of life, skilling up
- COCC has opportunity to partner with large employers – forest products, in home care, construction, etc.
 - College is not just classes, but a transitional period of young people's lives, how do they become participants in their communities and society.
- Online class access opened opportunities for rural residents.
- La Pine/South County is the only population center in Central Oregon without a COCC campus.
 - Classes historically low-enrolled, but a chicken or the egg program. Low enrollment because COCC doesn't have a strong presence.

- Wants to partner to create a culture of learning, come to partners to find gaps in academic and workforce development spaces.
- 2030 is the next time COCC will go to the community to vote on a Bond Measure, this would be the time to possibly secure money for facilities and programming for this region.
- Build demand to justify building a campus.

How many people exiting La Pine High School enter the military?

- Average 5%, ROTC program at the school. With COVID recruiters don't come to school as much.
- Don "Gunny" Milbourn retired, which was a major part of the program. Still have great people staffing the program.

What is happening in K-8 to ensure students have skills necessary to be ready for high school and later education?

- When South County kids enter school, they are greatly behind their peers. How do we bridge the gap for earliest learners (preschool, SMART readers, access to library, literature)
- In the classroom they have challenges apart from curriculum, teachers don't have time to do anything other than curriculum. But we need students to be humans too, this is critical.
- Everyone is feeling the heat, takes more than what is being done now.
- Teachers need the support from the community.
- Can't add any more to elementary school teachers' plate, need to compliment and work with them rather than add demands.

Have panelists considered an early childhood care CTE program?

- High school began conversations with COCC about this program. Bend high schools have started a program. Classes began in La Pine this year.
- Over 10% of the school population forecasted for the class and are getting college credit for the course. 2nd semester they will go to elementary and middle school and get hands on experience.

Community Comments:

Students in CTE programs (trades, industry partners outside of school) graduate at higher percentages. How do students have more meaningful experiences? Find opportunities that give students a why -- clubs and extracurricular programming are consistently ranked by students as meaningful things.

La Pine High School was staffed at regular ratio of the rest of the district, recently got funded by the district for another counselor. Meant other pieces of the budget didn't have to be cut to fund this position. That is support from the Bend-La Pine SD.

Hired high quality teachers throughout K-12. Full time alternative education program certified teacher and support staff person on-site (flexible program for struggling younger students and credit recovery for older students).

Many students cannot or will not regularly attend class. Credits aren't related to seat time, offering alternative times and options to get these credits necessary for graduation.

High school and middle school want an after-school program – Night Hawks, 24 students identified to start in this cohort. For younger students who need help with skills, class, and older students doing credit recovery.

La Pine High wants to send the message that if you want to work hard and get a diploma they will find a way to make it happen.

COIC serves an important role for students moving towards GED, certificates, alternative education programs.

Rural schools needed more support, so South County liaison from the district was created. Hired a Family Engagement specialist who was a previous FAN Advocate. Working K-12 with all the schools to help parents access resources, student information, newsletters, etc.

Communication – need new and creative solutions.

So many roles for volunteers and opportunities to help in schools. Place for the community to further support and advocate for students.

It's easy to raise money to solve a problem, but unless you have a focus and community buy-in it dissipates and loses the ability to make an impact. South County Collaborative is looking to make the money matter and bring everyone together around a plan/goal.

We need folks to sit down and develop a Preschool – Continuing education action plan, what are the next steps that need to occur? Where can we link with community groups and create buy-in?

Klamath Promise – 50 stakeholders got together every month to get together and find solutions around graduation rates. Assessment, awareness, planning, implementation. It takes time, and the money is out there, we just need to create the plan.

Parents not wanting to be involved or having bad experiences with schools. The schools needs to sell to the community on why education is important. Starts with parents and community culture.

- Generational poverty and trauma, parents don't have access to the tools to prep their children before school.
- Neighbor Impact is doing phenomenal work in supporting early childhood care providers, preschools.
- The library tries to support the community at on the basic level, families, preschool age children.

Morningstar Relief nursery, 0-5 age care, work with parents closely. Parent education classes are starting soon in La Pine.

- They used to have these in mid-early 2010s. Went away when the grants went away – funding is a barrier.

La Pine can be insular and hard to enter for new families/individuals.

Education 101 and Health Occupation classes with intention of sparking students interests early. Bringing individuals back into the community to stay is important in a transient community.

Dream building, bringing back hope for young people and parents. Girls STEAM would be happy to organize an event with alumni from their program who are working in these fields as examples for local youth. Importance of association for young people with others who have similar interests.

Community member in Three Rivers: Three Rivers needs infrastructure so kids can ride bikes to class. Their waitress was an elementary school teacher and worked a restaurant job at night. Two teachers with Three River's School salaries cannot afford to live in Three Rivers/Sunriver. Need to create affordable workforce housing.

Three Rivers Community:

- Despite requests, the community is not looked at as an unincorporated area. This means that we cannot receive access to grants, recycling services, and infrastructure improvements.
- The nitrate loading the rivers and waterways is a result of unintentional community planning. For example:
 - The county sold off their lots in Three Rivers. These lots are being developed.
 - The forest is being slashed in residential areas. Wells are drying. Nitrates and other toxins are spilling into waterways.
 - The river sits below the water table. The water table rests atop an impermeable layer. Water runoff from unintentional sewer leakage into the high water table transfer to rivers. Contrast this with intentional communities like Crosswater and Sunriver. Their irrigation and sewer systems are designed to ensure the river is not being dumped with toxic substances.
- Role of County
 - Safe infrastructure: roads, waterways, ecosystems
 - Intentional action: recognize as unincorporated area, sewer system, forest protections.
 - Infrastructure of Opportunity: Alleviate poverty, commercial development, grant access, jobs, programs to help struggling families rather than code enforcement.
 - Partner with state and federal agencies and resources.