

**Portland Children's Levy
Allocation Committee Meeting Minutes
March 30, 2020 3:00 p.m.
Location: Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

The full record of the meeting may be viewed on the Portland Children's Investment Fund website: www.portlandchildrenslevy.org or YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2fsufd5BBr8>

Attending: Mitch Hornecker, Jessica Vega Pederson, Traci Rossi, Felicia Tripp-Folsom, Dan Ryan (Chair).

Welcome/introduction of Allocation Committee and Children's Levy staff

Dany Ryan: Good afternoon, everyone, I'm city commissioner Dan Ryan, welcome to the first Portland Children's Levy Allocation Committee meeting of 2021. I'm joined by my committee colleagues. Multnomah County Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson, hello there. County appointed member Felicia Tripp Folsom. Hello. And county appointed member Traci Rossi. Mitch Hornecker may join us later. Let's get started. I'm also joined by the levy staff, led by Lisa Pellegrino, and I want to thank everyone who is joining on us live stream. Before we get started let's approve the minutes from November 30th meeting. May I have a motion?

Vega Pederson: So moved.

Tripp Folsom: Second.

Ryan: Thank you. All those in favor? Okay. It's unanimous.

Public Comment: None

Revenue Projections

Ryan: We'll kick off the meeting with Lisa Pellegrino, will present updated information from the revenue projections. It's all yours.

Lisa Pellegrino: I'm just sharing my screen here, so give me a sec and I'll get this -- as Dan said, I'm going to update you on the revenue forecast that we received in January from the city economist. So, this is an annual affair, and he is projecting that our revenues, our tax revenues will decline by \$3.9 million over the grant period. Just to refresh your memory, the three-year grant period is the first year is we are currently in the first year of the grant period and there's two more fiscal years after that. So when we started this fiscal year, PCL's fund balance was \$12.4 million. To refresh people's memories, especially those who were not with us at the time we were doing this, which would be Traci and Dan Ryan, we base all the grant making on the projected revenues we have at the time that we make multiyear grants. So that's why fund balance accrued over time. Also, in part because grant budgets are not always fully spent out. Anywhere from one to 5% depending

on the year, is sometimes not spent. That can also accrue fund balance. When we started the grant making in 2019, the committee allocated \$8 million of that fund balance to be allocated in the three-year grant period we just began with the large and small grants. And we planned to use the rest of the fund balance for renewals of the three-year grants down the line. The main reason for expending that fund balance over time and more slowly is to assure a stable level of investment year to year in the community. So, we don't have peaks and valleys that lead to programs having to start and stop or cut people off with services. That was the overall goal. But given the fact we're projected to have revenue loss; we can use that fund balance to make up for the projected revenue loss over the next three years. Because there's adequate fund balance for that. And we don't have to make the good news here is we don't have to make any cuts. I know we were all making decisions last April and May, we were concerned that we might have to make cuts if revenues were substantially lower, but they're not projected to be so low we have to do any cutting. That's a big relief for grantees and for everybody. There's some possibility that we will have less funds than -- smaller amount of funding to invest in renewals down the line, that's FY23-24, and 24-25, so that's a few years hence. But there's no need to deal with that now. It's too uncertain to know whether we'll not have that level of funds because revenue projections change every year. It's also possible that we won't spend down the fund balance quickly if there's unspent grant funds, people don't spend their full budgets. So that's the revenue picture. Really considering the timing, not too bad. I'm happy to take any questions or hear any discussion.

Ryan: Thank you, Lisa. Does anyone have any questions for discussion about what we just heard? It was good news for the most part, I would say. Thank you, Lisa.

Public Comment: None

Small Grants Fund Results and Process Feedback

Power Point Slides are appended to these minutes

Ryan: Next we have Arika Bridgeman-Bunyoli, and Alix Sanchez to present findings and recommendations from applicant and reviewer feedback on the small grants funding process we just went through.

Alix was a member of the small grants design team, senior manager at Multnomah county domestic and sexual violence coordination office. Welcome, Alix, I'm glad you're here. We will have -- have you over 10 years of experience in cultural specific programming and parent education, domestic violence, and child welfare. Alix is also proud two-spirit person and a member of the little shell band of the -- I don't want to mispronounce it. Will you tell us how to pronounce?

Alix Sanchez: The Little Shell Band of Ojibwe.

Bridgeman-Bunyoli: So today I will present the findings from the small grants process from the survey that we collected data from. In which we surveyed community members, applicants and

reviewers. And then Alix will present about their experience on design team and the recommendations of the design team.

So as you remember, last year we conducted eight community conversations in February and March, and then the step one funding process to place between May and August. The review team chose people who chose applicants to move from step one into step two. The step two applicants presented their materials to us, the written applications, and their grant budgets. Between September and November, and also participated in interviews with the community reviewers. And then the Allocation Committee approved the recommendations from the reviewers at the November 24th meeting, and the city council approved the funding recommendations, in December.

So the fact of the review team, which is composed of design team members, six design team members and six community members, made funding recommendations as well as deciding who moves from step one to step two is actually one of the unique components of the small grants process. In order to get feedback from the process, we completed two surveys after each step. Each step contained a survey with community members or applicants, and the first step, community members who participated in community conversations or applicant information sessions were surveyed along with people who actually submitted applications. And the second step in the applicant survey only people who completed the step two process were surveyed. And in both steps, the reviewers and the design team members were surveyed. In the second step, our sample size was much smaller than in the first. And so, when we look at the data from the second step, we need to proceed with caution, knowing that the numbers are so small, the data may not be as reliable and robust as it is in step one.

So, from the applicant feedback, the top five strengths of the process were the community conversations, PCL staff communication and support throughout the process, ongoing commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, and accessible materials on the website. Additionally, over 80% of applicants agreed that the step one application itself helped applicants think through ways that their organizations could be more inclusive of black, indigenous, and children and youth of color who also have disabilities. So, one applicant wrote, "the question were reflective of the grant experience -- expectation. It helped organizations to reflect about inclusion and better community engagement." while the applicants were satisfied overall, they also had suggested several areas of improvement.

Many expressed uncertainty about the diversity of reviewers, and we believe this is most likely because we disclosed the names and bios of our design team members through social media, but we did not do that for community review members. Also step two applicants only met two members of the review team throughout the process. Applicants also wanted the score criteria earlier and wanted more feedback and consistency between reviewers and their scores. They also suggested that the interactive piece of the process, which was our interviews, could be done earlier in the process, and involve more visual and storytelling tools.

Now, one thing that we have highlighted here is that based on community engagement processes that PCL did in the past. Black, indigenous, children and youth of color with disabilities were a

priority population in this funding process. All applicants were asked to explain steps that they would take to be inclusive of BIPOC children and youth with disabilities and their programs. While we received only two comments from applicants raising concerns in this area, we have included them here. So, one applicant suggested that there be fuller recognition of disability within the equity lens. We appreciate the focus on race and intersectionality but believe that disability often gets lost in this conversation, especially for people with intellectual disability and very complex support needs. Another comment was that they didn't feel there were enough supports for other offerings that were non-disability focused to provide support for children with disabilities.

Next we'll look at the feedback from the reviewers. The top feedback, the top strengths from the reviewers were, again, PCL staff communication. The commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion in the process overall. And reviewer training and group meetings, which included the diversity of reviewers, relationship building, timing and pacing of the training, and parts of the score sheet. Also 100% of the reviewers said that they valued the top thing, which was the communication.

Looking at the areas of improvement from the reviewers, there was concern about the scoring criteria, the reviewers found that while scoring criteria rewarded organizations that were serving intersectional communities, it disadvantaged immigrant-led and culturally specific organizations. This was addressed in the step one decision making meeting and presented to the Allocation Committee on September 14th, 2020. But reviewers commented on the importance of addressing this in future rounds. They also mentioned the reviewer training. A few indicated the training didn't help build trust among reviewers or help them to understand the score sheet. They also discussed the final decision-making process. The applicant interviews and feeling that we needed to look at ways to continue to make the interview process to be more interactive, in much the same way that was commented by the applicants. And then finally mentioning the LGBTQ community as a priority population. So, one comment about that was that I'd love to see some messaging from PCL to the general community and other granting organization, about what we learned in this process. Regarding oral communication versus written communication, and how that can create inherent disparity in a grant review process, and also how it highlighted that even among orgs representing marginalized communities, that lgbtqia2+ and disabled youth are in need of well-informed and focused attention and programming.

So in conclusion, both applicants and reviewers together experienced a high level of satisfaction with communication and support received from PCL staff. They felt the process reflected a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and that there were improvements needed to the review process, such as how PCL communicates about reviewer recruitment, qualifications, and training. And, the scoring criteria used.

You do need to acknowledge there were some limitations, both to the data and the process. Because this was a pilot, which we were developing, as we were impacted by an unexpected pandemic, our options for some part of the process were limited. Covid-19 impacted our options for the interactive process and the community engagement. In addition, our sample size for step two surveys was very small, and we have little data about people who participated in community

conversations and applicant information sessions, but then chose not to apply, and little information about why they may have made that decision.

So next I'm going to turn it over to Alix, and they're going to talk more about their design team experience and our recommendations from the design team moving forward.

Sanchez: As Arika said, my name is Alix Sanchez, I use they/them pronouns and I'm the Multnomah County Domestic and Sexual Violence Coordination Office manager. I came to the design team as a former large grant recipient prior to coming to the Multnomah County I worked for a long-time -- at the Native American Youth and Family Center, and during that time I developed a really strong and supportive relationship with PCL staff. Huge shout out to Meg and both Lisa's, but I was also very aware of the challenges that come along with government funding. I was really eager to engage in a process that would help run the reach of these funds, particularly in communities of color, LGBTQ+ communities and disability communities, because it can be a high barrier of entry for folks to take on government contracts or engage in grant making processes like the PCL large grant process.

So as the design team, we really wanted to develop our funding process to center trust and relationship with prospective grantees, and to address a lot of the barriers that have traditionally kept smaller organizations out of the larger grant making government funding processes. Often despite our best intentions, and as government funding, often the processes are driven more by the needs of the system and bureaucratic needs rather than the needs of the community and service providers. Applications often rely solely on the written word, which really disadvantages a lot of groups, including smaller organizations with less means to hire grant writers, and those who speak English as a second language.

So through the small grants process, we really sought to create transparency and allow for a variety of ways for people to showcase their work, and really wanted to center that trust and relationship building which we often as government funders walk a really fine line between true transparency and relationship and trust, and sort of risk mitigation and bureaucratic processes that really call for a lot of distance and some assumption of objectivity that really doesn't line up with a lot of work in the community.

So, there were several recommendations related to the funding process that the review team created recommendations on, and so one of the areas for improvement highlighted as Arika said, was the interview portion of the application process. We took in to account a lot of different considerations when we were thinking through step one and step two of the process. And really considered multiple options for how we could jump that barrier of relying solely on the written word, and we felt we had developed an excellent process, and then covid-19 became an issue, and our options became much more limited. And our ability to build relationships with our prospective grantees was really curtailed by covid-19. So, kind of weighing our options for step two, we found that the online interview option via videoconferencing select the most equitable and flexible solution. We knew it wouldn't be perfect early on, because a lot of folks have really different levels of familiarity, comfort with technology, access to technology, but the -- by the

time step two happened in the fall, luckily everyone had practice with zoom-style meetings and had mostly figured out their technology.

So, in the next round of funding design team has recommended that we make some changes to the interview process, possibly moving it earlier. Making it step one. Creating more relationship-based opportunities and possibly taking our interviews out into community and meeting with folks on their turf. And out in the world. Or offering folks the ability to submit a video or audio presentation of their work. We feel like both of these options will give applicants a lot more agency in what they share and how they talk about their work, and create a less directed process for them to really dig into why their work is so important in the community.

Our other recommendation is that we transitioned the work of the design team into an ad hoc advisory board. So, made up of a combination of design team members, plus participants including youth voice and other community stakeholders, possibly including reviewers from this first grant making process and other leadership from communities of color, LGBTQ community and disability community. We feel like this ad hoc advisory board will help to refine the grant making process based on feedback from our current grantees and identify priority areas for outreach. And suggest ways of outreach such as meeting with specific community leaders, community conversations, and other means that will come to light. We would also coordinate some ongoing efforts with the large grant process, which is something that really excites me. I think the small grant and large grant processes have a lot to learn from each other. And would make recommendations to the Allocation Committee about small grants. So, we're really excited about the prospect of having this ad hoc advisory board come together to really continue that intentional mode of development alongside of our grantees.

I also just quickly want to give a special shout out to Arika, who really had to roll with a lot of punches through this whole first grant making process. And throughout everything, really stayed centered in community, stayed center in the needs especially of BIPOC folks, LGBTQ folks, people with disabilities, and I think that her ability to stay centered in relationship really comes through in the feedback about the process from the folks that we interacted with. So I just wanted to give her props. And just say thank you. All of you, for allowing me to participate in this. It was a really great process. One that I felt was just a really fantastic way to bring the resource of the city out to the folks who don't currently have access to them. So, I appreciate you all. Thank you.

Ryan: Thank you so much, Alix, and thank you Arika. Let's just open it up. Does anyone have any questions, comments? Any of my colleagues? It was such a great report.

Jessica Vega Pederson: I will be happy to comment. First of all, it's wonderful to see Alix here. Alix often testifies before the board, so it's great to have you here, and thank you so much for all of the work that you've done on the small grants design team. This is great. Arika, I want to commend you as well for the work that's been done on this. As we started this brand-new endeavor for the Portland Children's Levy, we really wanted to make sure that not only were we finding a way to serve the smaller organization was these grant dollars, but find that balance between making it accessible so that organizations could apply for the money and put right into practice in the community, but also balance it with what was required, because of the Children's

Levy measure and what was passed by the voters. And so, having this process where we have done such a good job in surveying and review and then taking those results and figuring out how we're going to respond to that is really important. And so I'm glad we went through this process, and I support the idea that an ad hoc committee that's going to take the feedback and really look at how we can do continuous improvement on this small grants program for future years. So just appreciate the work and really appreciate the ways that we're constantly looking to find out how we can make this -- these dollars more accessible, the process more accessible, to everyone in our community.

Traci Rossi: Thank you. I want to echo everything Commissioner Vega Pederson shared, thank you Alix and Arika.

A comment and then a question. So, I do think this is pretty revolutionary from the perspective of allowing smaller organizations to have access. And I do think it's something that other foundations, private foundations could take a look at. So, I would encourage you all as you continue to refine this process to share this work with some of our foundations in town, because I think it could definitely be translated. So, kudos, and thank you.

And I did have a question for you, Arika. I was curious on the survey results for step two, and I was just -- the interesting drop in terms of participation. If you had any idea why we had fewer respondents for survey two, step two, and if there's anything we do to help that in the future?

Bridgeman-Bunyoli: I have a couple of ideas. One is just that the timing of it was such that the survey had to come out in December of 2020. I think that was part of it for the applicant survey. I'm not quite as certain with the reviewers, except reviewers also were most likely pretty tired and busy at the end of the year. But we couldn't do it until after we had approval of the funding recommendations, so just -- the timing of the process made it hit the holidays.

Rossi: That makes sense, thank you.

Felicia Tripp Folsom: For both Alix and Arika, in your slide show presentation you noticed strengths and improvements. How will the advisory committee prioritize what strengths to continue and what improvements to work on first? Because you obviously some are going to take more priority over others. What innovations that people really like that you're saying, yep, we're going to expand those, and going, which improvements, where do we start? Which improvements are going to be a priority as well?

Bridgeman-Bunyoli: I'll add a couple of things and then I'll see if Alix wants to chime in. I think a lot of the body of work of the ad hoc committee is yet to be developed. A lot of this process raised a lot of questions of things for us to look at. One of the things I appreciate and just need to acknowledge is part of this process was building the bicycle while you're riding it. Which naturally created limitations, especially as we reacted to pandemics, wildfires, you know, all the things that we were hit with. So, having an ad hoc committee with more time to really think through all the pieces in itself is going to be very helpful.

One of the strengths that was very consistent on both sides was the communications. So, there were weekly emails where questions were answered that everybody got to see, so if one

applicant had a question, other applicants got to see that, and they may not have gotten as far as in the process. So, it was helpful to have the information that other people were asking. So -- and emails from me updating here's where we are in the process, this is what's coming up next, being accessible, having the materials on the website. So, all of those things that were around how communication happens were a really strong strength, but I think we would want to continue doing those in that way.

How we change the interview process creates a lot of logistical challenges. We had 31 applicants in step one, and the majority heard about it either from an email from me or from another part of the city, it was very word of mouth. It was either word of mouth or from me or referred by some other part. Next time we'll have a larger applicant pool in the beginning, so how to do that relationship piece up front in the beginning which was really consistent, and I heard even personally people call me especially from the immigrant community saying we want this earlier. But we haven't figured out how that can happen. And that's really part of the work of the ad hoc, is to think, logistically, we understand some of the things that didn't work, but we're going to have to some thinking about how to fix it. Alix, do you have anything to add?

Sanchez: The only thing would I add is having an ad hoc committee moving forward will also I think help us do some of the outreach that we want to do in communities that weren't as deeply reflected in the first go round. I think specifically about organizations that serve LGBTQ+ youth, and some of the other smaller immigrant refugee communities that we didn't see represented. That we had a ton in the first round. So excited, and I think also would have the ability to do -- more focused outreach and more focused relationship building and technical assistance for folks who are engaging in the process next time around.

Ryan: This is great conversation. I love what my colleagues have said so far. Let me add a couple more thoughts. I think these might be -- this might be a question. It could be because I'm dyslexic and my fiancé is downstairs speaking in Spanish, it made me think of handicaps that make it challenging to access the applications. And I really appreciate that you even brought this up. So when you think of languages other than English, how do you see, what kind of tools can we offer to the smaller organizations where it's another language is their prime ray language -- primary language, so they might have a shot, some equal shot at these awards? What are some thoughts that you have, Arika?

Bridgeman-Bunyoli: One of the things that we did in this round was I did a lot of outreach to specific smaller immigrant and refugee communities. I have a lot of connections through community health work there's work with a variety of populations, so I asked them about organizations that they knew that might be smaller that are less engaged. So, one example, and they did not end up being funded, but because they did not quite qualify in terms of their income, but I'm hoping they'll come back next round. And they'll have built up their organization a little bit. But in the community conversations, we had interpretation available, in the in-person one we had, and when it was requested, we made the application materials available in Arabic, that was the only one that was requested. So it was translated into Arabic. They were able to read the application, and the application instructions in Arabic, and have someone from their staff work with me who was bilingual in both languages.

We were also trying to think about -- one of the reasons why we settled on the interviews was because we were looking for a way that we could be able to provide interpretation if that was needed for anyone, as well as something that would be accessible to people with a variety of disabilities. And the interview format was the only format we could think of in Covid times that if someone had a disability, we could still arrange for captioning, or ASL, a variety of different accommodations, as well as if I needed an interpreter, there were ways to do that over zoom. So, we were trying to think about those factors as well. The LGBTQ piece is interesting, because it was mentioned in all of our materials, and emphasized, and we had design team members and reviewers who reflected the community. Outreach was done, but we didn't receive any applications from organizations that were primarily focused on LGBTQ youth. Even though it was welcomed in the materials. So that's part of how that has come up, is another community to be thought of, because we didn't have any that applied that were specifically focused on them.

Ryan: Alix, I don't know if you want to add to that, but I think I have a question that might be specific to you. I've done some reviewing in the past, and I found that the second time I did it I was much better than the first time. Which would make sense. There was some feedback that some felt like they didn't -- it was challenging doing the reviews and the score sheet was confusing. Anything you could shed some light on that in hindsight.

Sanchez: I think our review team had a wide variety of folks, some who had lots of experience doing grant reviews. Some long-time funders and grant makers, and other folks who are from community who had never done a grant review. So, I think their -- there's always some assumptions made and terms of art that we might use when talking about grant reviewing that maybe could be explained better, or we could have had a conversation about. I think a lot of the questions that came up during the review kind of fell into the categories of, like, the things we didn't know we didn't know. And then when the process came to fruition, was like oh, uh-oh, we're not meaning the same thing, when we talk about this or that. So, I think the next time around it will be easier. We also had some concrete feedback from reviewers about coming to a more unified idea of what constitutes a high score and a low score. We had some applications that some reviewers rated them a 60 and some rated them a 10. So, it was like, there can't be that big of a difference. But some of it was just I think reviewers valuing certain pieces of that application or reading with a more critical eye than others. And so, I think as we go into the next round of funding, I think we probably need to have a values-based conversation about scoring. Given that experience and move from there. And make sure that up front we really know what we mean by some of the terms we use in scoring for folks who don't have as much experience.

Ryan: Thank you, Alix. I know we have to move on to the next topic. I think everyone had a chance to say -- okay. I want to say thank you, I loved the comments you made about taking it out to the community, even stepping that up. And I really liked the comment about how the small grants can help with the large grant process, because I know I've only been here about six months, but I really think, Arika, you led a great process, and I actually think the best processes are when we're just willing to build it while we ride the bike. That's just called continuous improvement and not being stuck in status quo. Thank you both for being here and for that great presentation and for allowing us to have some good free-flowing dialogue. Appreciate it.

Process Improvement Report, 2019-20 Grantmaking

Moving on, what is next? Meg, you're up. You're going to present findings and recommendations from applicant and reviewers from the 2019-2020 grant making process.

Meg McElroy: The thinking cap you just had on can stay on, you just have to shift the perspective a little bit from the smaller grants to the larger grants. I'm going to walk you through sort of similarly to what Arika did. Feedback we heard from applicants and reviewers in that larger and longer process. First I will share my screen.

Ryan: While you're looking, I failed to ask if there was any comments from the public on the last section. Were there any, John?

John Coghlan: No one yet.

McElroy: So just to -- a little reminder too that you all received a report, some detailing the feedback from reviewers and applicants in this process. And Arika put together a great report on the small grants process as well. And all of these documents will be on our website after this meeting. So, for folks who want to see greater detailed than what's covered in these presentations, they can do so. Just a quick reminder, stage setting, it took about two years of planning to get to the 2019-20 grant making process. There was nine months of community engagement led by Empress Rules Equity Consulting in which Kheoshi Owens and her team talked to over 400 community members, service providers, through surveys and focus groups to identify funding priorities for that process. But also, in that process was a very big theme about improving the way in which the community is involved in our processes, so that informed part of what Arika was able to accomplish with the small grants. Also leading up to the 2019-20 grant making, we contracted with PSU's center for improvement of child and family services, and a team from there conducted a three-month qualitative evaluation of our past PCL grant making process, looking exclusively at equity and transparency considerations, and they provided us with 30 recommendations for ways to improve our grant making.

And it took us the better part of January of 2019 to September of 2019 working with the committee to operationalize many of those recommendations, and I'll talk about that in a minute. But I want to sort of clarify that last fall in September we provided you all with some data about how the funding results looked compared to some of the process changes that we made.

So, we looked at application data and who was funded and who wasn't. This is going to focus more on like I said, reviewer and applicant experience in our process based on those changes. And at the very end I'm going to tie together some of what we heard from Arika and Alix with what's come out of findings in this process. So you may recall that part of PSU's recommendations and their suggestions for improving equity in our process included overhauling our request for investment, or application document, the questions that we asked, the scoring criteria, and focusing on organizations' commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion, their staffing, their overall practices as an organization, and their programming. They made several suggestions around how we could better be transparent with our communications to applicants and support

them through the process, so we created an FAQ on our website. We had a weekly question and answer email digest that went to applicants for every question that an applicant asked us, we provided an answer to them and we shared those questions and answers out to all potential applicants. And then we provided frequent email and website updates on our timeline and our funding process to applicants all along the way.

We used the community volunteer review process as we had in the past, but we conducted outreach and recruitment for reviewers over four months. We screened applicants for their experience not only in program areas, but their experience with equity, diversity, and inclusion, in nonprofit organizations and other organizations. And we provided reviewers with training and individual check-ins and stipends for their work in this process. And we also revamped the applicant testimony process to you all, so in the past applicants would come to public meetings and provide testimony on behalf of their applications, this time around we in advance provided written and audio or video feedback options -- testimony options, which as the pandemic unfolded proved to be really fortunate, because it was just easy to keep the meeting schedule as we had planned it and to still support folks in their ability to provide testimony.

So, we did some online surveys, similarly to what was done with the small grant surveys with reviewers and applicants. Through survey monkey, and they were anonymous. We had a high return rate, would I say out of the 63 community reviewers that ultimately participated in our process, 54 completed our survey, and they provided some demographic data when they completed that survey, so we know that 48% of them identified as black, indigenous, and people of color, 24 as white, and two did not answer that question. It was an optional question.

And then our applicant survey went out to 131 individuals that were associated with all the applications that were submitted to PCL. 44 people responded to that survey. What we don't know is which applicants they're associated with because the survey was anonymous. And so, we don't know if those 44 people represent -- how many applicants they represent. We want to be a little bit cautious with how we interpret their data, because we don't know if they're slanted toward a certain pool of applicants in that group or not. And then the surveys included, questions as well as open-ended questions. So, the findings here are based on where the Likert scale and the open-ended questions coalesced around some agreement.

So, I'm starting with reviewer results in part because those are the more robust results. And all the reviewers who participated agreed it was a positive experience, I think that's a pretty incredible and remarkable finding, because it was a lot of work. In their open-ended comments 25 of them had positive things to say about being involved in the community review process. And 53 out of 50 -- 52 out of 53 of the reviewers who made -- who answered the Likert scale questions on our survey agreed that applicants -- the questions that were asked in the application helped them understand applicants' commitment to racial equity, diversity, and inclusion. In that way the changes we made did help reviewers understand what they were looking at. In addition to that, what I think is remarkable about the feedback that reviewers gave is not only were they positive about being reviewers, but we asked them then sort of here are six elements of the review process, do you have ideas for improvements about these, or do you think they need improvement? And so, they both had a strong experience in being involved with our review

process, and they also had comments on how to make it stronger. I guess I feel that speaks to their care about our process.

And so, these topics are ordered by where there was the most energy of feedback to sort of the fewest comments and areas for feedback. The reviewers, 17 of them offered comments to make improvements on the application's focus on racial equity, diversity, and inclusion. What's interesting in their comments is they pooled in two areas. There were folks who offered more -- they wanted more structure in our applications, sort of which types of questions were asked, how they're asked, and how the points are weighted for those questions. And the other half of the comments coalesced around wanting more flexibility and less structure, and more reviewer discretion in points and things. So, there was a little bit of tension in there.

The next area that reviewers had feedback on was the application questions themselves. In general, their feedback suggested that the application is long, they would like to see it sort of be less burdensome for applicants, if there's ways to shorten or simplify the questions and offer more support and instructions to applicants. They think that would be worthwhile. They offered some comments around the score form mechanics, making it easier for them to complete the scoring exercise itself, like could it have an excel auto calculator, could it have more guidance on scoring certain things? Could it be a fillable form?

And finally, there were kind of a few reviewers who suggested that the training and practice for reviewers could be -- they would like more practice doing scoring before they have to do it on application, so improving training. And they also noted a few noted that they could use more time to do it or have fewer apps to score or be provided a greater stipend.

Applicants had in this process some similar feedback around communication as they did in small grants. One of the strengths applicants noted in our process was around our communication and transparency with them around funding process. It's nearly all the respondents agreed that staff communicated well about process and timelines. Most agreed the questions and answers, the weekly question and answer was a transparent way for them to have similar information about their application in the funding process. There were also for the most part, most of the respondents agreed that the testimony changes were better than providing testimony during public meetings. And all of them agreed that getting their score forms, that reviewers completed prior to having to submit testimony was helpful to them.

And then reviewers -- applicant feedback where they noted improvements needed was really around two areas of the process. One was around the decision making, and one was around the review process. In the decision-making part, several noted that they didn't really understand the process that was used to facilitate Allocation Committee meetings, and they didn't understand some of the rationale that committee used in their decisions. They also noted that they didn't understand the information that we as staff provided to explain the funding recommendations that we gave to the committee. And in their open-ended comments they provided some ideas for improving the process, but none of those coalesced around a theme. They were five discretely different ideas, but still they're offering ideas around want doing see improvements in that area.

With the review process, 20 out of 44 of the respondents were neutral about their satisfaction with PCL's recruiting, screening, and training reviewers, which suggests they didn't really know what we did there. A couple were not satisfied with the criteria -- more than a couple. A few were not satisfied with the criteria used by reviewers, and a couple offered comments about what to improve there. So when we look at kind of what applicants had to say and what reviewers had to say in this particular process, we do see high satisfaction with PCL's communication and it suggests we should continue using the practices that we instituted, including the flexible testimony options. And given reviewers' own positive experience in this process, and what came out of community engagement a while back, having a value of making sure there's community involved in our process, we think continuing a community-based review process is important. And the -- their feedback around wanting -- all their feedback around improvements in the process suggest ways to involve them, maybe more or sooner in order for them to feel more prepared. But also, for them to help structure the application questions and criteria. And I think there's some of that theme that came out of small grants too, and we'll talk more about that.

Obviously, we can improve communication with applicants about the review process itself, sort of how we recruited reviewers, what their qualifications were, how we trained them, it did seem like they didn't have enough information about that. And then there are questions about how to increase transparency in the decision making process, whether we need to change how we facilitate the meeting, whether staff or reviewers should make recommendations and ways in which we could help increase the transparent around -- transparency around Allocation Committee members sharing their rationale for decisions.

So finally, when we look at the two processes together, and kind of think about what came out of the feedback from both of them, it's clear that staff communication and all the practices we've been using were a key strength. So that feels good, because we made a lot of work and improvement in that area, and it's good to know that on average, applicants felt that way too.

And it's clear in both processes that we can do a better job making sure applicants understand what the review process will be, and who will be doing the review. Given reviewers energy around -- and ideas for improving the process, there certainly seems to be questions about whether and how we could involve them more deeply in designing the application questions and scoring criteria. And then a key learning from the small grants process that could be used in the large grant process is to consider having reviewers rather than staff make the funding recommendations to the allocation committee. In the small grants process, applicant feedback didn't coalesce around criticism of the committee process so much as did it in the large grant. So it does raise questions about whether there's ways to mitigate some of that by involving reviewers in the funding recommendations in our larger grants the same way we did with the smaller grants. And now it's open to questions. I'm going to stop sharing that presentation. I'm happy to field any questions.

Ryan: Thank you, Meg. Let's open up to questions and comments.

Tripp Folsom: In the large grant process, because it's been a while, do we, for applicants, do we show them what is a strong proposal versus a not-so-strong proposal? Like giving them an actual sample.

McElroy: We didn't universally provide like a packet of materials to everybody that did that. That's a great question. In the past, when applicants, after they went through the process, if they weren't funded, if they asked for feedback from us as staff, and if they wanted examples of high-scoring applications we gave it to them. But we did not as a matter of practice give people examples of high-scoring or low-scoring responses. Questions as they were preparing their applications.

Tripp Folsom: I would say the same also, questions for reviewers, were reviewers given examples of strong proposals and not-so-strong proposals? And one more thing, were reviewers given -- you know how OCF has those Oregon gaps reports? So, it really shows you the gaps in regard to social, economic, racial, all that, so that reviewers know sort of how -- what to look for in those opportunity gaps? Are they given any sort of context around that piece as well? So I'm just thinking about based off your feedback that you got from reviewers and from applicants as well, and thinking about just listening to Arika's review process as well. Because it sounds like when I look at the small grants process, they were given -- they were overcommunicated in a good way, given more information than some of them actually needed, and what I'm hearing as a theme from our large grant application is they need more communication in areas that we assume they know.

And that's for both applicants and reviewers around, like, what is that transparency on -- what is a strong application? What is an application that isn't -- doesn't address all of the needs, for example, when you're a grant reviewer, it's not only being able to say here is a need, here are the activities that are associated with the needs, here are the outcomes we're trying to address, and here are the disparities that exist in the region. So, you can clearly read that as a reviewer if you're a seasoned reviewer like myself, in an application. Well, I didn't realize until about 10 years into reviewing glance not everybody understood that naturally. When reviewing applications. It's what Commissioner Ryan said, you get better as review applications. So I'm just thinking about how we can break down some of those assumptions.

McElroy: Great question. Reviewers were given -- were provided a training in which they did some practice scoring during that training. But I think what their feedback tells me is they wanted more practice than they were given. So even though they did some, they still want more. And I think that is fair feedback for sure. I don't -- I'm not familiar with the OCF product you're referring to, but each of our RFI's were explicit about the kinds of things the applicants needed to speak to, and so reviewers weren't necessarily given a context about what gaps to be familiar with, they were -- we recruited them to have knowledge of our program areas and around equity, diversity, and inclusion, and kind of screen them for the way in which they answered questions that we asked of them in an online format about their experience in those program areas. So they did come in with understanding of mentoring programs, for example, or early childhood programming, and then applicants had to speak to those questions about gaps, like how are you addressing all of these priorities that have come out of our community engagement process? So

I'm not sure how that OCF example that you're explaining would help our reviewers in this process. I do feel like the -- their feedback about wanting more practice scoring is really what resonates for me, and then applicants in terms of the communication piece, they felt good about the communication we as staff gave them about the process, what it seemed like they didn't quite understand was sort of who were these reviewers that reviewed and scored their applications, and how did they get to be scorers?

And it seems even though we did provide an overview to applicants about that, it was as the pandemic was unfolding, literally everything was shutting down that week, and even if they read it, it might have been difficult to understand, and undoubtedly we can do a better job making it an easier document to understand next time. But it is important, it is hard for me to remember all of the information, some of the key information we were sending out to people involved in this process, particularly applicants, was unfolding literally as the entire city was shutting down. They were receiving funding recommendations, score forms, and having to prepare and think about testimony the day that schools were closed. It was a hectic time. And in part I think we didn't get a great response rate from applicants on this feedback survey because when we sent it out in June, we were still -- the beginning of June, right, we -- the city was on the streets, so there's a lot of parts sometimes, it's hard to remember that context as we think about this. But it's another reason why I guess to me what I think is really interesting about reviewers' feedback in both processes is now that -- they really were involved in the materials, so if you could harness their ideas about how to write the questions, and how to create the scoring criteria, not to say applicants shouldn't be included in that, but if reviewers understand and formulate all of that and agree to what they're about to embark on, then I think there's less confusion once they're in the middle of it. I don't know if I answered your question.

Tripp Folsom: I put the report in the chat for you. I think it's the right report.

McElroy: Okay. I can copy it and paste that out of the chat into my own files here.

Ryan: Thank you, Felicia. Anyone else? Okay. I just have, Meg, I have one question. When you were showing the demographics of the recipients of applicants, correct, I thought I saw, that right?

McElroy: There was demographics of the reviewers who responded to the reviewer survey.

Our applicant data was part of what we discussed in the fall. But go ahead. Ask your question, because --

Ryan: I thought that was for some reason applicant demographic data. And then I couldn't remember what the reviewer data was. But I was looking at the reviewer data. So, do you think it did a pretty good job of the demographics, do they match up pretty well?

Historically there's been a disparity, if you will, with reviewers not being as reflective of the community as the applicants. I think. At least that's what my experience is. I was -- now i'm more impressed -- anyway, good job, because the reviewer numbers looked really good.

McElroy: I would say it's the most diverse reviewer pool we've had, so that was an improvement. But -- so of the 50 plus people who responded to the reviewer survey, out of the 63 total reviewers we had, I think I noted 48% identified as black, indigenous, and people of color. I'm not sure what figure to compare it to with applicants. Because applicant organizations staff could be 10 people, it could be 40. I'm not sure how to draw the comparison. I guess I would say probably that large applicant organizations employ probably collectively if we were to look at all staff demographics we have from all our applicant agent sits, probably a slightly more diverse staff than we had reviewers, so I'm sure there's room to improve in the diversity of our reviewers.

Ryan: When you -- when we were reading about the surveys from the applicants, was that only those that were awarded, or was it those that participate --

McElroy: We don't know. We didn't ask them the question because we didn't want them to feel like they couldn't be honest if they were one way or the other.

If they said they were funded and they were still critical we didn't want them to think we would be retaliatory, like we could find out who they were and somehow be retaliatory. And similarly, we didn't want to say if you were unfunded and have them think they couldn't speak their mind, because then they would be jeopardized in a future process. We just didn't ask.

Ryan: I know, but we would never do that, I hope. It would be interesting to see, I think, those that were awarded and those that were not, and see if there was a difference in how they -- the feedback they gave.

McElroy: I can tell by their open-ended comments in some cases whether they were awarded or not, because they were clear in the feedback. So of course, people who didn't receive funding, and said so somehow in one of their comments was also included.

Ryan: Stay with that question, maybe you'll get different opinions from people that do surveys, if it's a good idea to ask that question or not.

McElroy: I think it would have to be, yeah, that's a great idea. But I think when we were going through it, given the time that we were putting this survey together, and knowing where people were emotionally, we wanted to be as barrier-free as we could in our survey questions.

Ryan: Did you appreciate the feedback on the -- on how -- having the reviewers have maybe more influence over the decisions than the staff? Is that what I -- the way we experienced with the small grants?

McElroy: Well, Arika should chime in, but it seemed like in the small grants there wasn't a lot of negative feedback from applicants about reviewers' role and recommendations.

Ryan: Okay. So that's an example where you're learning from one another. Okay. That seemed really solid what we experienced with the small grants. I just noticed that distinguishing difference between the two. Okay. Anyone else have any feedback or questions before we go to the next item? All right. Meg, you're still up, right?

No Public Comment

2019-20 Performance Report including COVID-19 Impacts

McElroy: Will do. So now you can kind of switch your thinking caps a little bit, because we're going to look instead at the performance results from all grantees funded in 2019-20. So, while we were doing that grant making process, we still had 65 plus grantees responding to and handling the pandemic once that began to unfold, and nine months --

Pellegrino: She's wanting to look at all the grants in '19-20 and what happened with them. And the thing to remember is remember '19-20 is not the grants we currently have right now. So, you need to separate yourself from what's happening right now to what was happening in '19-20, because not all the same programs were funded. So she's I think wanting you to shift your perspective and make sure that you're thinking now, this is about, we do an annual review of this, so we always tell the allocation committee what happened and in particular in this quite unusual year, we asked for a lot of more information about what the -- how did Covid change what we're doing or how did you adapt and what was going on for programs. She's going to give you the stats and then what happened with Covid.

Tripp Folsom: That's going to be fascinating, because working with another funder, I was amazed at how many nonprofits really had to adapt and be creative. And how some programs are so in-person dependent, and they couldn't adapt because it was so -- so it's going to be fascinating, not only to see the '19-20 data, but to see the '20-21 data, because then the new applicants had to start the process in Covid. So I think that will be just as fascinating, because just reading another whole allocation process for another funder, I was just amazed in just reading the stories of the different nonprofits, and I was looking at ones that were statewide. So it was just really fascinating. Just their adaptations.

Vega Pederson: For me, seeing this information of how they've had to pivot is incredible, but also I know we at the county and I know the city of Portland were also asking a lot of these same organizations to do so much and to take on so much more work because of the Covid response, whether it's rental assistance, or Covid testing and then now vaccine, so it's -- we're just seeing a small piece of the picture, I think with this report in terms of the PCL programs. And funded activities. But there's -- the whole world a lot of these organizations were working with switched so much.

McElroy: Just a reminder, the overall levy goals are, we -- the data we gather are towards understanding our progress on those goals, preparing children for schools, supporting their success in and out of school, and eliminating racial and ethnic disparities and children's well-being and success. So first we want to understand who all was served. Over 10,000 children were served by levy funded programs in five program areas. We'll talk separately about hunger relief. The next few slides are specific to early childhood, childhood abuse intervention, prevention, mentoring, foster care and after-school. So -- and these data are mainly for the first nine months of 2019-20. Once the pandemic hit, it disrupted a lot of data collection and typical data procedures that we would use, including how we work with our school partners and our grantees work with school partners around data.

So, we'll talk a little bit about that as we go through. For those families for which we do have data -- families that -- for data that was collected by grantees, 94% of families were in households with incomes at 185% of the federal poverty level or less, so that's qualifying for free and reduced price lunch program in our schools. A little over a quarter of children participating in a levy-funded programs were from homes where the primary language is other than English, about 15% spoke Spanish and nearly 13% spoke another language. Around 65% of children served identified as black, indigenous, and people of color, and 40% reside or attend school in east Portland.

Ryan: Meg, could you clarify if that means school districts east of PPS, or is it just east of the Willamette river?

McElroy: East of 82nd avenue. Part of PPS east of 82nd, but it's all of David Douglas, most of Centennial.

So, in this case we try to understand for the children served, how well we're reaching the population, especially in terms of our goal of wanting to eliminate racial and ethnic disparity in children's outcomes. We want to understand if the population we serve is at least proportional in its race, ethnicity to our school population, and preferably is more diverse since children of color are disproportionately impacted by negative outcomes and the challenges in our systems. So the top bar here shows the race, ethnicity of the children served by the levy in 19-20, up through -- '19-20, the data collected through mid-march of 2020. And the data below are students enrolled in Portland area, so not just PPS, Portland area schools, for that school year.

So what you can see is that the levy served a much more racially and ethnically diverse population than our enrolled in our area schools, and I do want to point out that there's a little bit of challenge to how we compare these data, because the way the school districts handle their data is slightly different than ours, so the primary example that I usually point to is the Latinx community. In the school data, in that bottom bar, the school count any child who identifies as Latinx and African American or Latinx and native American, strictly as Latinx in this count. They are not counted as multiracial, whereas in PCL data, their typical practice is for children who identify as Latinx and African American, they're considered multiracial in these data graph. So, there's a little bit of difficulty in some of the comparisons. For six years our grants reported disaggregated race and ethnicity identity data in that multiracial category. And so what I can tell you is that when they provided those data to us, the number of children who identified for example as Native American more than doubled when we looked at that category. The number of children who identified as Latinx in our data increased by 40%. So, we're definitely reaching out to a more diverse population than our area schools and some of our data masks a little bit how diverse our population is by -- in comparison to what we're looking at with the school data.

Ryan: I just want to thank you for that story. It really does explain under counting that goes on in the Native American community. The one thing I want to ask is with the Asian category, we found it to be really helpful to call out the Pacific-Islander data within Asian, because the disparities are so much more extreme when you target that community. So, I hope going forward we can figure that out.

McElroy: Thank you, commissioner Ryan. What's probably hard to see on this slide, because the type face --

Ryan: My eyes are old. Did you already do that?

McElroy: We did. But it's also, like the typeface is a light gray, but there's a bar that is sort of very light yellow, and less than 1% of the students --

That's, in comparison to the school data, looks like we're underreaching that population. Which has been a consistent theme in our data. However, when you dig aggregate the multiracial category, children who identify as Pacific-Islander is a number that increases dramatically as well in our data. Trying to understand how well students participate or attend the programs funded by the levy, so that they -- we can understand whether or not they have a chance at not only reaching the outcomes & intended by the service, but having the outcomes measured on them, so if they're attending we can do that. And again, this is participants who met participation goals by mid-March of 2020. It was very difficult to think about how to ask grantees to quantify that after mid-March. People were -- organizations were pivoting their entire workforces to have the equipment and the connection to work remotely, they hadn't figured out what constitutes or defines participation in a virtual era, and they were responding to families' needs. So we didn't ask anyone to talk to us about those data after mid-march. Normally that rate is closer to 80%, but without a full year of data and given the disruption, it was lower this year. Outcomes, so for the 60 grantees who track outcomes, again, separately from hunger relief, collectively they tracked over 200 different goals. There's an average of about three to five goals per grantee. And they met close to 80% of the goals that they track. However, this year several grantees who track goals related to school attendance for the students they serve and school behavior for the kids they serve, we were not able to get those data from the school district this year.

We might have been able to, but we elected not to ask grantees to track down the participant lists they would normally track, that we then submit to MESD, who then compiles for us the number and percent of kids who met the student -- school attendance and school behavior outcomes that we're looking for. It would have only been for three-quarters of a year, it would have been difficult to compare those results to what we typically have for a full year, and the school districts were not tracking attendance and school behavior obviously after mid-march of 2020. So, we just opted not to ask grantees to worry about those school-related outcome data for this year.

In this next slide what we do have, though, are a couple of highlights. So, in each of our program areas certain programs track similar outcome goals, and this is the number of programs who track this specific outcome goal and the percent of either client -- of children, youth, or families who met that goal. So even for the outcomes that they were able to track up through the middle of March, typically over 90% of children youth, or parents and caregivers were meeting the goals that they were tracking.

Staff turnover, we look at annually program stability, it does have an impact on program implementation, and this year for the over 750 positions that are funded either full-time or part-time across levy funded programs, only 16.2% of those positions turned over, which is pretty low. It ranges from 15-20%, and those rates are similar in the sectors that we fund in after school or

early childhood, foster care. So, turnover had declined in this past fiscal year. This is one set of data that's for the full year, not just the nine months. And a reminder that the levy pays for invested in a four-year training and workplace wellness and reflective supervision consultation and support effort for program areas that had our highest turnover, that's our child abuse prevention intervention, foster care, and early childhood program areas. And during the time that that effort was in place, turnover in two of the program areas, early childhood, and foster care, declined over three years. And for the past two years, it declined in child abuse prevention intervention. So, we were feeling pretty positive about that effort.

On to the Covid emergency response. Things we learned from grantees, we asked grantees to talk to us about service delivery, how well clients remained in services, whether or not they did new outreach and enrollment, how they responded to the emergency, and what kind of planning and lessons learned took place. So, this is really covering that mid-March through the end of June period of last year. So nearly all programs, again, this is not hunger relief, we're going to talk about those separately -- nearly all programs pivoted to offering some kind of virtual service. There were a few after-school programs for which that was difficult, but the rest managed to do it somehow. Almost all of them said that their clients remained enrolled, however, they did not do a lot of outreach or enroll new clients. They really were trying to focus on and manage the needs of the families they were already serving. And they also wanted to be really careful about staff workloads who -- staff were also handling family demands, many of them, and working alongside their clients.

Nearly all programs offered some kind of direct emergency assistance and relief to families, everything from food, diapers, wipes, personal protective equipment, activity kits and materials, technology equipment, gift cards, utility and rent assistance, or other referrals to support. And grantees mostly said they were providing check-ins weekly with families to support their needs. There were also a number of after-school grantees who as needed they repurposed staff positions and folks to help with emergency response. So, if they weren't able to offer the kind of after-school program they would have normally been offering if schools were open, they were doing other things to support the agency's emergency response efforts.

And some of the things that grantees reported to us about how they internally managed their response, they spent a lot of time figuring out how to take care of their staff, and staff looked out for each other in thousand they went on to support families' needs as couple of quotes I'll share in a minute. Agencies had to develop immense new policies and procedures from working from home as I said earlier, and pivot entire workforces to becoming equipped and remote. They spent a lot of time as I'm sure many of you are already familiar with, providing support to families to access technology equipment to get online, and grantee were, many what would I call the first responders to digital learning platforms. They were helping families navigate and understand all of the different communication and platforms that school districts were providing in order to get kids into initial distance learning school. And they're still doing that as Lisa will tell you a little bit more. And then they talked about how much they were providing up-to-date, relevant Covid-related health and safety information to families. They were also like a very clear path of that information.

So here are a couple of quotes that grantees shared. One is from an early childhood grantee. "the first two months of quarantine program staff communicated with families on a daily basis by telephone and text message to ensure they were getting accurate and up-to-date information regarding the pandemic and available resources. The transition to remote services did require adjustment, but we are very glad to see families were receptive and we did not lose any clients due to the transition in services." and I would say that's pretty symbolic of what a lot of grantees reported. And then another foster care grantee shared, "we did not enroll any new families from Covid-19, the racial unrest in network and with all program staff grieving the loss of loved ones in each team member's family in the past six months, we have had several losses on our team already this year. Our continuing focus has been to keep the team unified and strong during this period while maintaining services to enrolled families." I feel like both quotes feel very symbolic to me to many of the themes we read in grantees' reports.

So, hunger relief services, these data are on the full-service year, because these programs, these five grantees were in a very different position than the rest. They were directly responding to needs immediately and not having to consider the virtual transition in the same way our other grantees were. So, some of these data are up through mid-March, the unduplicated count of children served, there were 8,900. After about mid-March, the school pantries had to dramatically change how they do their data counting. Normally they have a bit more of an interactive way in which they count unique clients served. But to minimize contact and to reduce barriers to families getting food, they suspended that particular data practice and instead they were merely counting the number of children and/or families who were served at each opportunity. And so, the number of repeat children served was over 16,000. That is more than half of their goal that they projected for the year.

For the grantees that were doing home-delivered meals and bulk food and the free discounted food program, both also exceeded their goals. Demographics, again, these are only through the unique clients served as of mid-march, but about 60% of children and over half of the parents and caregivers served in the hunger relief services through mid-march identified as black, indigenous, and children of color. People of color. Nearly half were from homes where the primary language spoken is other than English. And 63% lived or went to school east of 82nd avenue.

The unique story for the hunger relief grantees is how much they had to handle the upheaval to the school pantry system. And that can't be overstated. Partners lost access to equipment and food that was stored inside of schools, they had people needed emergency food more than ever, partners had to get permission to distribute food at the school properties, they had to consolidate pantries and partners needed to communicate with each other even more frequently, and as well as clearer to get the word out about where to access food once sites were consolidated and changed. They needed more staffing in order to pack and prepare the boxes of food and distribute them. And all of the hunger relief grantees responded to requests for home deliveries of food to families when needed, and some were able to access pandemic related funding streams from the state and the federal resources in order to further help families.

And then finally, the Community Childcare Initiative, this is my last slide, but this is our effort to help low-income working families afford high-quality childcare. So, it served over 300 children

exceeding its goal of 200 for last year, and nearly half identify as children of color and we are missing data on the demographics of almost a quarter of the kids served. So, take those demographics a little bit with caution. The childcare community as many of you probably know, had a wild ride in response to the pandemic. So the state required all child care providers to get an emergency licensure if they wanted to stay open, otherwise they had to close down. And then for those providers who remained open, they had to prioritize their care for essential workers initially. The state child care subsidy program, which our subsidy program complements, did increase its eligibility criteria in response to the pandemic, it provided eligibility for families earning up to 250% of the federal poverty level, it also stopped requiring a copay. So families didn't have to contribute to their child care up to a certain point, but the state child care subsidy only pays for a certain amount of the child care, and so if your child care provider charges more than what the subsidy is that the state provides, there's a gap there. And that's where our subsidy spent a lot of its funding, to help families. But there were several families obviously affected by unemployment who left child care or who were taking -- taking Covid precautions who left child care between March and June, and the state subsidy continued to pay providers, even if children left care and our child care initiative did the same in order to make sure the child care providers could continue to operate. In addition, some of the funds in that grant were used to provide mini grants to the 52 providers who participate in our childcare initiatives. An average of \$3,800 per provider was provided for lost business. But also used for food, health and safety supplies, program space, utilities, insurance to operate their business, and to replace lost wages. And that completes this one, and I'll take questions.

Ryan: Thank you, Meg. Let's -- welcome, Mitch, to the meeting. Any questions or comments? That's a lot. That's a compliment.

McElroy: Grantees really deserve a medal. They were -- they did an extraordinary job in very difficult circumstances.

Ryan: Anyone on the committee have a question?

Vega Pederson: I have a comment. I just appreciate all the information, and really meg what you said about the way that our grantees were able to pivot and -- when I think of the way they all responded to Covid and what was -- what their communities and their clients were facing, it was like, how do you serve people in the moment? How do you get -- and I appreciate the flexibility that you and staff did in giving them the space to do that and to respond in recognizing that we had to do changes in how we're -- on the data we're asking for them, for instance, and some of the other information, because it's exactly what the moment called for. And it was truly a crisis for -- and still is a crisis in so many ways.

The one comment I have, and this is just something, it's a little bigger than this topic itself, but I'm just -- I'm so concerned about the impact for children and families and really just for everyone, from the mental health perspective after everything we've gone through this year. And I really think when a levy is up for renewal, we should think about having mental health be an additional funding category for it. So I just wanted to put that out there now, because I really am concerned

about the resources that we have, the resources that we're going to need, and it's always been an urgent matter, but I think it's more after crisis now than ever.

Ryan: Thank you, Commissioner Vega Pederson. I'll just say I guess it's more of a comment. When I looked at the percentage that we're serving east of 82nd, it was 40%, 40.3. And then when you looked at the hunger data who was impacting, it was 63%. So, I really hope as we go forward to really look at seeing those that we grant at a higher percentage east of 82nd. I think we got a really good barometer of that disparity with the hunger data. So, I just wanted to put that out.

The second thing is, this is also bigger than this moment, but it's just something we all think about. When you hear the reports that child abuse cases are down, we all know that it's because teachers and counselors were always the number one source for that data. And so, it's been overwhelming to think about over the last year, what we're missing. And my question, I guess is a question, are you hearing from any of our partners who have access to the families because they became really their partners to try to navigate teaching and learning, if you will, help them navigate that during this time of virtual learning, have they been a resource to help with that reporting? Have you heard any stories about how they had to show up and take care of that gap that's been unfortunately created because our children haven't been -- our students haven't been in our schools?

Lisa Hansell: I am the grant manager in the child abuse prevention and foster care program area. I would say it's a continued focus of all our child abuse prevention and foster care grantees. Meg mentioned in her -- in the reporting that grantees are -- were contacting families at least weekly, and many in the child abuse prevention and foster care program area were contacting even daily sometimes more than daily. I have shared the same concerns since the beginning of this as well, that you mentioned. I think that our grantees have been -- have really done a lot to stay connected with the families and children that they're serving, I have raised concerns about the families who weren't connected to the services. You also heard most of the grantees were not engaging new families in service.

Some of the things I've heard as well is the limitations with virtual contact as being the primary contact is there's not as much freedom to talk in -- on -- because everyone in the house can hear, right? So, everyone's home. So, I know there are concerns around that as well that maybe the grantees aren't hearing the full story. But they're doing what they can to stay connected and stay engaged, and help support and really focus on how do we protect and how do we help reduce stress and really working to help families have access to the basic needs they have, and the additional stresses that are happening due to the pandemic and job losses so that they can help reduce the stress. And I know that they've shared that families have really expressed appreciation for the support, because oftentimes they're the only -- the isolation is huge right now as well and causing a lot of stress. And so having that contact with the grantee helps reduce that isolation and therefore reducing the stress as well.

Ryan: Thank you, Lisa. And to the commissioner's early point, it's the isolation that feeds the mental health concerns. When you mentioned that 84% remain enrolled, I'm sure we all thought

oh, that's 16% that are no longer enrolled. Those are the ones that I was thinking about when I started this dialogue. So anyway, it's good data, but it does continue to ask more questions, and how we can keep showing up. I'm not saying there's going to be another pandemic, but who knows what's coming up. We have no idea what the future holds. So we sure are learning a lot during this time. And I appreciate this. Any other comments from the committee? I know we're getting close to the -- to 5:00 where we all have hard stops. And i'm the reason why we're probably delayed. Any other questions or comments?

Tripp Folsom: I was going to say one more thing, adding to Commissioner Vega Pederson that will be coming out of the pandemic, are all of the young people that just gave up going to school. We don't have the data on all the young people in our educational system just not in school, so I think that will be something that we as the levy have to really think about. The numbers across the nation just northwest education association, I know they're tracking the Covid slide, but also how do you track all the students that are not in school, and how is that going to have an impact when we reopen next year? Because there's a significant amount of kids that are just not there because they can't be. Because they don't -- really can't do either the hybrid or the virtual. So I think that will be something else we need to consider as a levy as well.

Ryan: Thanks Felicia. We always in our former life when we connected with each other, summer learning loss has always been the time when the disparities accelerate, so this past year has made all of us cringe about how fast those are accelerating. I think having this special targeted focus coming up next time would be smart. Okay. I guess it's time to move on. Thank you so much, Meg.

2020-21 Mid-Year Progress Report Including COVID-19 Impacts

Pellegrino: The last presentation, I promise is not very many slides. Let me share my screen here. Again, I'm going to let you know you need to switch your headset and think now into this year.

So we're going to tell you a little bit about what we heard at the -- about all of our grantees. This is the all the new grants we made, so there's start-up programs, there are people who are just beginning things. And then there are programs that have been with us for a long time. So, it's really a mix, I just want you to -- we're talking about 85 different programs when we get into this slide show. So different headset.

So first I want to tell you about what happens with the programs that are not hunger relief programs. We're holding hunger relief separate because their response to the pandemic is separate. All the other program areas, we're trying to understand how well are people doing against their typical service goals, understanding that many programs had to pivot and do different activities than what they've done before. So, we're just trying to understand where they are against their usual deliverables. And programs that are doing pretty well, they're pretty close to usually at the midyear, we would expect people to have served around 50% of their annual goal, and with programs that were able to report data, they're at about 46%. So that is encouraging overall. The programs are still reaching a fair number of kids they intended to reach.

One thing that number masks that I just want to take you underneath that data that speaks to the concerns the committee members just raised about the last set of data, and that's that this varies by program area. So, you have some programs that were not able to operate, so to Felicia's points there are programs that have not been able to operate because they were a drop-in service, so there's a few of those in there. There are in programs in there that have not been able to fully get up and running and be able to serve kids yet. There are programs that depend on DHS for referrals and have not gotten any or very few referrals yet, so some of their numbers are going to be down.

After-school programs have some specific and unique issues to their areas, because with schools closed, they're not able to connect with families to serve students directly and the Sun program, which is throughout the county, is not focused on doing any kind of facilitation for after-school programs at all, they're focused on helping families' basic needs. So that's been -- made it difficult for some after-school programs to operate at all or bring kids into programming. And then the last big thing on after-school programs that has been a barrier is screen fatigue. Which I'm sure you're all experiencing, being a two-hour zoom meeting. It's very challenging for kids after all-day online school or however many hours. They're not necessarily interested in participating in another program, and maybe their parents don't want them to. That's unique things to keep in mind that are a little bit masked in that overall data.

We'll probably see more variability this year in terms of numbers served. Community childcare initiative, which you just heard last year's report from Meg, they are over their -- they're at 81% of their goal, so doing fine this year. As not surprisingly, hunger relief services that are doing pantries, even mobile or schools, or in other community-based locations as well as programs doing meal delivery are serving more people and providing more food than they expected. So, they're responding to the crisis, the ongoing crisis and I think there's another -- someone just did a food insecurity survey, numbers are up and they're not surprisingly disproportionately falling on communities of color. So that's something I'm glad to see the people have been able to harness other funding streams and other resources and be able to provide food to more people. The education focused hunger relief programs have pivoted to supporting emergency food relief in various ways and have also done virtual education. So, folks in that, there's only a couple, but they were able to.

To pivot as well. So, we also asked -- hang on. My controls are falling apart. So, we asked grantees also about challenges, what are the challenges they're experiencing in this first half of the year of this is now nine months into Covid. And as you may expect, they have coalesced around some of the things you've been hearing about from Meg, and the challenges, the first were evidence in the first three months.

Around enrollment, the biggest one by far that the grantees cited was the slowness and difficulty of virtual outreach. Families are overloaded with communications, it's hard for them to respond to outreach, and it's just meant that everything goes more slowly. The other thing that people talked a lot about was the enrollment process as difficult -- it's difficult to do online, it's difficult to get completed. In situations where you need parental consent for the child to be enrolled in

service, with the grantee agency, it's been harder than usual, and it's never easy to get all the paperwork done to do that. That's been a barrier for folks.

Also, some folks not all, but some cited challenges with hiring staff. It's a slower process to do that in a pandemic, and as I mentioned before, getting referrals, particularly around foster care programs that need DHS referrals in order to enroll kids. So that -- those have been the challenges that were cited by most grantees.

For program engagement, that's how well are we getting people to participate, even though they might enroll, how much are they showing up and participating in the programming virtually? Not surprisingly, the number one thing cited by grantees as a barrier or as a challenge was family technology issues. And so that has -- in some cases abated but still rears its head because there are even though they might -- people have device and they might have gotten internet service, devices break down, the internet doesn't work that day, there's a problem, some other problem the agency has to help solve in order for the parent or child to access the service at all. So that's been number one.

As I mentioned before, screen fatigue is big for parents and for youth as well. Spending that much time online is hard. And it decreases the amount of engagement, also some providers are talking about what teachers see, people turn off their microphones and turn off videos, so they're there, but we don't know how much they're there. So that's another issue that's reared its head for particularly programs that are doing groups of youth and services.

The other major issue is families are focused on meeting basic needs, and kind of to Jessica's point, this is an ongoing situation that is pretty intense for much of our community. And families must stay focused on that and it's not left time to be engaged in programs that are supporting academics or other types of programs.

And then last, we specifically went back and did a lot of meetings with grantees one-on-one and asked them about how mental health issues have been showing up. And pretty much the vast majority of grantees that we talked to about this said absolutely has been showing up. So, to Jessica's point, it couldn't have been more on point and I'm sure you're talking to a lot of the same folks we're talking to. So it was really, some people raises the written report too, it's a serious issue and people are wanting help with it. And as other folks have said on the committee, isolation was probably number one as the biggest stresses, stress in general up for all these reasons. Anxiety also big, including anxiety about returning to normal. Grief, a lot of grief, people are processing, exhaustion with all of this, it's worn people down.

And then also as Felicia just pointed out, lack of motivation. And that shows up as maybe not going to school. Programs that might have had been helping kids do schoolwork, the kid has stopped showing up all together. So, it's harder to reach those kids, it's harder to bring people back online just because of the situation itself is not fully changing. Those were what we heard from grantees about mental health.

They were also interested in, we asked how -- how could we help, what kind of support do you need from PCL and what should we be doing as we face this last bit of the pandemic, and also as we return to normal.

The number one thing that people asked for was continued flexibility. So, we've given at your direction, given people flexibility in their contracted deliverables and the types of services and what they're doing, and we plan to continue that flexibility in a couple of specific ways. One of which is to make sure that people are revising their budgets and putting money into client assistance in the last quarter, so whatever monies they might have felt they would have spent on things that didn't happen, to really urging people they've already started to do that, so we've already started process can requests.

And the other thing is around carryover. We're going to allow people to apply essentially to carry over more funding that they didn't spend if they want to use it for client assistance. So, we're going to continue, we expect that this, the follow-up to the pandemic will continue with families in the community and people will need additional resources. So, we're hoping we'll be able to put our resources towards that. And most were happy to hear that.

The other thing of course, not surprisingly is folks wants mental health resources. And that could include lots of things, people have made lots of suggestions to us. Revising budgets or allowing people to pay for mental health staff that are in their agency, to be able to tap the resource of that -- within their agency to support people involved in various PCL funded programs. So that's one way. Training, and assistance, so both training allowing budget for more training around mental health for existing staff as well as potentially offering training to PCL grantees writ large, around mental health supports and resources available in the community.

Convening grantees, that was the other thing people talked about, specifically with mental health in mind, do we convene people around how folks are dealing with the mental health crisis, make sure people know about the resources others are using, make sure people are aware of the PCL programs, people's own knowledge about other PCL programs that might be useful to their clients. People also asked that we might be able to convene or support them by convening around virtual program delivery issues. Ideas for delivering virtual program and then best practices for doing it. So, help and support and continuing with virtual program delivery.

And then last, training. Just again, writ large, both with mental health, with possibly the virtual enrollment, is there any best practices or things that people have done they could share with others to help that process improve. Since we're likely to stay with virtual program delivery at least for the near future.

And then last, we asked folks what were their plans for returning to more in-person services and where are people -- what can we expect? Most people -- most of the grantees are continuing to offer virtual services, definitely through the end of the fiscal year, and possibly into the first quarter or so of the next fiscal year or longer, depending on what happens with schools. Many are already conducting limited in-person activities and they plan to continue that. So, they might go to drop off an activity kit at a person's house, and they may have a distanced masked visit

where they check in about needs. So, they're going to continue doing those activities, and they anticipate doing more. Many are doing things in the parks and plan to do that in the summer.

The biggest thing that people don't know is they don't know what's going to happen with schools, and will they be let back into schools. We have a few grantees that are planning to completely return to in-person services, these are folks who might control their own facilities and have policies in place they can have people on to their sites. That's only a relative few handful. Hunger relief programs are planning to continue their current service delivery methods until things change dramatically at schools, because so many of the school sites -- so many of them use schools for delivery. That looks ahead, and where we're heading for flexibility and assistance and support for grantees.

Happy to hear any questions or any further discussions you all might have for ways that we as PCL should be supporting people.

Ryan: Thank you, Lisa. I know we have only five minutes remaining. Does anyone have a burning question?

Rossi: I do. I think -- thanks so much for the information. I do have a question, because in terms of -- I'm wondering if we have a sense of how many families are interested in getting the vaccination, concerned because there's a lot of historical reasons for people to be nervous about it, but of course unfortunately communities of color have been impacted disproportionately in terms of health and mortality rates. But I wondered if that came up at all, or maybe this last iteration is too close to the vaccine to be available for those conversations to come up. Are there ways we can help spread the word about the importance of getting vaccinated, or information sharing if that's come up at all.

Pellegrino: Both have come up. I would say John Coghlan has done a lot of pushing on social media all kinds of vaccination resources, and information. So that's been the primary information way that we have tried to put out to the more general public or folks who are following on us social media. I would say in the conversations with grantees, it has come up in -- it's a cautious approach because of staff, both trying to make sure staff feel safe to offer services in person, and getting vaccinated and whatever people's fears or reservations are about staff level getting vaccinated, so agencies have been trying to work with staff primarily I think around this, but also putting, there's no doubt about people are putting a lot of grantees are putting information directly to families around resource and where they can find, get their questions answered, where -- helping them sign up for getting a vaccination, if that's been a priority. So there's -- people have talked about it, not in a systemic way, don't have numbers for you, but absolutely it came up and it's absolutely something that's occurring, and I guess I would say open up to other grant managers if you have anything to add on that point, because yes all checking in over -- we were all checking in the last few months with people directly.

Bridgeman-Bunyoli: I have been sending out, I get a lot of information directly from the county about all kinds of different Covid stuff. Clinics, materials in a variety of languages, and disability communities, it's been very comprehensive. And from other sources as well. And so I have a list of about 80 people, which includes my grantees, but also other people that I outreach to in a

variety of ways that I have been really trying to focus on getting those kinds of very specific information out to the communities about, and i've -- it's the only newsletter I have ever produced where people have -- no one has asked to be taken off the list, and people have sent me fan mail. Because they have not been able to get access to that information in other ways. So, I just appreciate really being able to try to do that.

Ryan: Thank you. Thank you Lisa. Lisa, did you want to do a one-minute update on staffing?

Pellegrino: Really quickly I want to -- I'm not sure everybody knows, this is Lisa Hansell's last meeting because she's technically retired. And she is graciously stayed on to help us through this transition period, and I can't thank her enough for that, and she knows how appreciative I am to have her help. And I just wanted to recognize her more than 10 years of service at the levy. And she has tirelessly contributed to the program team's efforts over the years. And she's educated all of us on how to best support foster youth, because that was not an expertise meg and I had when she joined our staff. So -- and how to best communicate with DHS, which is no easy feat. And I will say that her attention to detail and her focus on consistency has really improved all of our work, and I will say specifically my work. So I really appreciate that, and value that, and I have learned a lot from you over these years, and I want to just thank you for all you've given us and appreciate your time here. And I want to wish you the best on the next adventure. Whatever that may be.

Hansell: Thank you so much for those kind words. It's been an honor to serve, and i've certainly learned a lot as well from all of you, and especially from the grantees. It's been a real privilege to work alongside all of you, and all of them, and just to see -- the grantees' compassion, thoughtfulness, creativity, and their never ending dedication to the kids and families in this community has touched my heart and will stay there forever. Thank you.

Tripp Folsom: I just want you to know, I just feel like as I said in the chat, you are a jewel of a person, and your leadership over the years, not only with the Portland children's levy, but to our community, I am eternally grateful for. And when I heard you were retiring; I was happy for you. That you get to enjoy your time as you want. And I just wish you a very, very happy retirement.

Hansell: Thank you, Felicia. So sweet. Thank you.

Ryan: Thank you. Thank you for serving, and I hope you have a really -- I look forward to hearing about your next chapter in retirement.

I want to thank everyone for joining us today. Our next meeting will be 3:00 to 5:00 on Tuesday, the 15th of June. Agendas will be sent to the email list and posted at our website and shared on social media. We welcome your comments on agendas, about the Children's Levy, and we would like you to join our next meeting and participate if you can. That's about it. I hope you enjoyed our dialogue today, and that's what I thought it was, a really good conversation, and everyone have a wonderful rest of the month.

See you in June. Take care. And especially hats off to Lisa Hansell.

Adjourned 5:00 pm