



OREGON LIFE SAFETY TEAM Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 15, 2016
10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Oregon Public Safety Academy
4190 Aumsville Hwy. S.E. Salem, OR 97317
Classroom C109

Attendees/Representing

Dunn, John – Oregon Fire District Directors Association
Fernow, Jonathan – Oregon Department of Education (Guest Speaker)
Fischer, Krista – OSFM
Guinan, Justin – Tangent Fire District (Linn)
Hatch, Joanne – Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue (Clackamas/Washington)*
Houston, Laura – Oregon Fire Service Office Administrators
Johnson, Sean – Tangent Fire District (Guest)
Kettering, Cindy – Bend Fire Department (Deschutes)
Kusz, Jim – North Lincoln Fire & Rescue District #1 (Lincoln)
McGrew, Claire – OSFM
Nelson, Barbara – Stayton Fire District (Marion)
Roach, Amy – OSFM
Sims, Gary – Oregon Department of Corrections (Guest)
Slavens, Ginger – Nestucca Rural Fire Protection District (Tillamook)
Stafford, Stephanie – OSFM
Storms, Anne-Marie – Keizer Fire District (Marion)
Tibbetts, Robert – La Grande Fire Department (Union)*

**attended via teleconference*

Welcome/Introductions/Updates

Stephanie welcomed everyone to the meeting. Everyone went around the room and introduced themselves. Stephanie shared that we have several new members. Barbara Nelson with Stayton Fire District is now representing Marion county. Devon Wells, Assistant Chief at Hood River Fire will now be representing Hood River County, and Cindy Kettering from Bend Fire Department will be taking Susie Mansicalco's place as representative of Deschutes county.

Review of August Meeting Minutes

There were no minutes to review at this time.

Crossing Cultural Barriers – Jonathan Fernow, Oregon Department of Education

Jonathan introduced himself and talked about his background growing up in Argentina, his struggles coming back to the U.S. and the language barriers he faced as a youth in the American school system.

Jonathan lead the group in an activity called “place your bets” to check our general knowledge of migrant students in Oregon. In addition to Hispanic migrants, Oregon has Russian, Somali, Native American and Arabic migrant students. Oregon is the fifth Largest migrant state in the nation, ranked behind California, Texas, Washington, and Florida. Alaska is just behind Oregon at number six. Jim asked how politics tie into what states migrants are living in. Jonathan stated that there are states that have passed legislation that made being a migrant harder, so those areas have lost a large number of their workers. The total family income average is \$15,000 - \$17,499 for a migrant family, so relocating is difficult.

Oregon’s Office of Migrant Education Service Center (OMESC) reported that state educational agencies have identified 376,801 migrant children in the program which serves children in Oregon ages three to 21.

Some tips to remember when communicating with migrant populations were shared with the group and are as follows:

- If you look like police, a lawyer or a landlord, many migrants are not eager to speak with you. Ginger said that the insignia on the side of the truck can cause migrants to hide because they fear officials. Jonathan suggested learning this phrase; “No hablo espanol, Pero estoy aqui para ayudarles” which means “I don’t speak Spanish, but I am here to help you.”
- Have the purpose for your visit written out in various languages and that may help to get your point across, but remember that many people may speak a language, but may not be able to read it.
- Most Hispanic families in Oregon in the migrant programs are from southern Mexico. The largest states in Mexico are Oaxaca, Michacan, and Jalisco. In the state of Oaxaca alone there are 54 native dialects. Be mindful that just because the family is Hispanic, they may not speak basic Spanish.
- When communicating with second language learners, you can use pictures and gestures to get your point across. Other best practices for communication include total physical response, modeling, yes/no questions and use of realia (real life objects).

Be mindful that there are practices among different cultures which may be deemed as rude or may impede interaction with people. For example, the person you are speaking with may not look directly at an authority figure, they may look down or away, as this is a sign of respect in some cultures. In Asian countries, touching a child’s head is like touching their privates, and writing in red ink is a death threat in some countries.

There are 270 migrant camps currently in Oregon, with the majority of them being in Hood River and the Gorge area. These camps contain permanent dwellings and families move through with the crop cycles. They may stay a month or two before moving on. Occupational Safety and Health Administration has a list of migrant housing and dictates how many can live there and sets other rules regarding the house.

The group asked about best practices for gaining access to second language learners and Jonathan said translators are the best option. Ginger added that repetitive instruction can be helpful as well. Jonathan said one idea for better communication was to give instruction to two people and when you are finished, they turn to their partner and repeat the instructions, then have the second partner do the same. This will often times help because each partner got part of the direction, so between the two they are able to fill in the pieces that they missed.

The group was asked to share some of their cultural awareness ideas and tips. Jonathan said patience and respect are key when dealing with other cultures. Claire talked about her experience in agricultural claims investigations and how it could be extremely challenging at times. She found that even if she didn't record the conversation, people were not very willing to talk to her. She found that often the person would not be around when she went to interview them even after having scheduled that time. She said it is imperative that you be flexible and pay attention to what is going on. Jonathan stated that many cultures will not allow a female to be alone with a male visitor, and in some cultures the family will not allow visitors in the home without the head of the family present.

Jonathan talked about illegal migration, "coyotes", and corrupt guards. There are some families that will bring a young female family member to America and threaten them with jail or notifying the authorities unless they work like slaves. This leaves the young person in a situation of slavery or prostitution due to fear because they don't know anyone in the U.S. outside of the family they are staying with, and don't know the language or how to find help.

Jonathan talked about how there are many great translation apps for your phone. Some of the free translator services available are:

- Voice Translator Free - lets you translate what you say into more than 50 languages
- Free Language Translator – you have to be online and mostly uses Google Translate
- Photo Translator Free – supports 33 languages
- Easy Translator – 58 languages. Paste text, select language and it translates.

Other Business

Gary talked about his role at the Oregon Department of Corrections. Gary is the Administrator of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. He leads a State-Tribal Public Safety Cluster group with police chiefs and public safety officers. His focus is diversity and working with Native American Tribes in Oregon.

Claire shared that Krista Fischer is retiring October 31st. Krista talked about her time with the OSFM and the changes in the years she has been here. Krista shared that she is grateful for her time with the agency.

Stephanie shared about the 2016 Diversity Conference she and Amy attended yesterday. Generations in the workplace was one of the workshops that she attended. One of the things that she learned is that there are four generations currently in the workforce. Stephanie thought that presentation would be good topic for an OLST meeting next year.

Claire talked about the Fire Prevention Month USB drives, and the new Smoke Alarm Checklists that have been added to the Materials Request order form,
<http://www.oregon.gov/osp/SFM/Pages/EducationMaterialRequest.aspx>.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 11:37 a.m.