

EARLY LEARNING HUB REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE

Prepared for the Oregon State Legislature by the Early Learning Division

February 3, 2014

A Letter from the Chair

Dear Oregon Legislators,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this report on the progress of Oregon’s Early Learning Hubs. Three years ago when I was asked to serve as the chair of Oregon’s Early Learning Council our state stood at a crossroads for early childhood education: We could continue doing things the way we’ve done them for decades – and get the same results – or we could chart a new course with the opportunity to get different outcomes for our youngest children. Oregon had just adopted its ambitious 40-40-20 goal and an Early Childhood Family Support Transition Team put forth a set of recommendations to significantly improve the way our state approaches early childhood education.

This bipartisan team of educators, doctors, advocates, service providers, elected officials, parents and policy makers recommended, among other things, that Oregon organize early childhood services using “accountability hubs.” The team proposed a model for early learning service integration where communities would work across silos, blending funding and strategies, with a focus on achieving better outcomes for our children.

Three years later, we are standing at another crossroads – moving from vision to on-the-ground implementation. Change of this magnitude is not easy. As you’ll read in this report, the Early Learning Council awarded only one Early Learning Hub and is in negotiation with five more. We acknowledge the criticism of considering an additional five hubs: that it may be best to focus only on the one clearly “ready” community. We also acknowledge the criticism that the Early Learning Council is being too strict: that we should negotiate with several additional potential hubs. The Council is steadfast in its belief that substantial change is necessary to achieve the outcomes laid out for us in statute, and is committed to fulfilling the role given us by the Legislature. As we move forward, the Early Learning Council will stay resolute and unconditional in our focus on achieving outcomes and unrelenting in insisting on a demonstrated readiness to do what is necessary to alter courses.

We applaud every community that stepped up in the first application round to become a Hub. We encourage communities that have not yet moved forward to intensify their efforts and push themselves to readiness in round two. The Early Learning Council looks forward to continued work with you as we leave our safe harbors and progress on our new course.

Sincerely,



Pam Curtis

Chair, Oregon Early Learning Council

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Executive Summary

Three years ago the state adopted the ambitious 40-40-20 goal: by 2025, 40% of adult Oregonians will earn a bachelor's degree or higher, 40% will earn an associate degree or post-secondary credential and 20% will earn a high school diploma or equivalent. To achieve this goal we must dramatically transform the way our education system does its work.

Historically, Oregon has spent almost \$400 million each biennium on services for children ages 0 through 5 and their families. Although these funds go to support programs and services that do good work, they have traditionally worked in isolation from one another and from state services, creating a disjointed approach to the early care and education of our children that is not integrated, cost-effective nor accountable for results.

As a result, a significant number of Oregon's children enter kindergarten without the early literacy, early math and social/emotional behavioral skills necessary for academic success. Consider the results of Oregon's first year of statewide kindergarten assessment, administered in the fall of 2013:

- **Early literacy:** 33% of entering kindergarteners could name five or fewer letters and 14% **could not name a single letter.** Additionally, 37% of the state's entering kindergarteners **could not identify a single letter sound.**
- **Early math:** 53% of entering kindergartners answered at least half the questions correctly. However, only 43% of African American and Native American students, and 38% of Hispanic students answered at least half of the questions correctly.
- **Approaches to learning:** Based on teacher observation, **approximately 25% of entering kindergartners did not regularly complete skills such as completing tasks or following directions.** Research indicates that a child's ability to self-regulate is predictive of future reading and math achievement.

The numbers show that the seeds are being sown for Oregon's high school drop-out rate in these early years.

Oregon's longstanding, disjointed approach to early learning and care has not yielded the results necessary to prepare children for school. For the past three years the Legislature, the Early Learning Council and communities across the state have engaged in a significant reform effort to build a system that is more coordinated and to achieve higher levels of readiness for school.

In recognition of the challenge and the ineffectiveness of the status quo, beginning in 2011 Governor Kitzhaber and the Legislature put in place – through SB 909 (2011), HB 4165 (2012) and HB 2013 (2013) – the policy direction and performance expectations for outcome-focused, regionalized, cross-sector, community lead structure for organizing early learning, now known as Early Learning Hubs.

As of this writing, initial implementation steps for the new system are actively under way. The Early Learning Council has awarded one contract to one Hub and is negotiating the terms of five more contracts. These early Hubs include:

- Early Learning Hub Inc. (Marion County)
- Frontier Early Learning Hub (Grant and Harney Counties)
- South Central Oregon Early Learning Hub (Douglas and Lake Counties)
- Early Learning Multnomah (Multnomah County)
- Lane County Early Learning Hub (Lane County)
- Yamhill Early Learning Hub (Yamhill County)

As per HB 2013 reporting requirements, this report provides an update to the Legislature on the legislative history and implementation progress as well as a look at the strategic plans of six Early Learning Hubs the Early Learning Council is negotiating contracts with.

Implementation of Early Learning Hubs is proceeding in multiple phases. Phase one is complete, Phase Two is underway and the remaining launch phases are expected to launch on time.

Timeline of Early Learning Hub Implementation

Phase	Timeline	Key activities
Phase One	July 2013 – Oct. 2013	Community support and technical assistance. Round one request for Hub application (RFA) launch.
Phase Two	Oct. 2013 – Feb. 2014	Evaluation of awards. Contract negotiation. Contract awards.
Phase Three	Feb. 2014 – May 2014	Community support and technical assistance. Round two Hub RFA launch.
Phase Four	June 2014 – July 2014	Evaluation of awards. Contract negotiation. Contract awards.
Phase Five	Aug. 2014 – July 2015	Statewide implementation.

This report provides details on completed phases as well as what the financial transition from county commissions on children and families to Early Learning Hubs will look like in phase four. Following the process report, an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of round one applications is provided. Finally, the goals and strategic plans for each of the six Early Learning Hubs awarded contracts or currently in negotiation are available at the end of the report.

Any member of the Legislative Assembly may request a copy of this report by contacting the Early Learning Division at earlylearning.OEIB@state.or.us. Additionally, this report will be posted online at www.oregonearlylearning.com.

Introduction

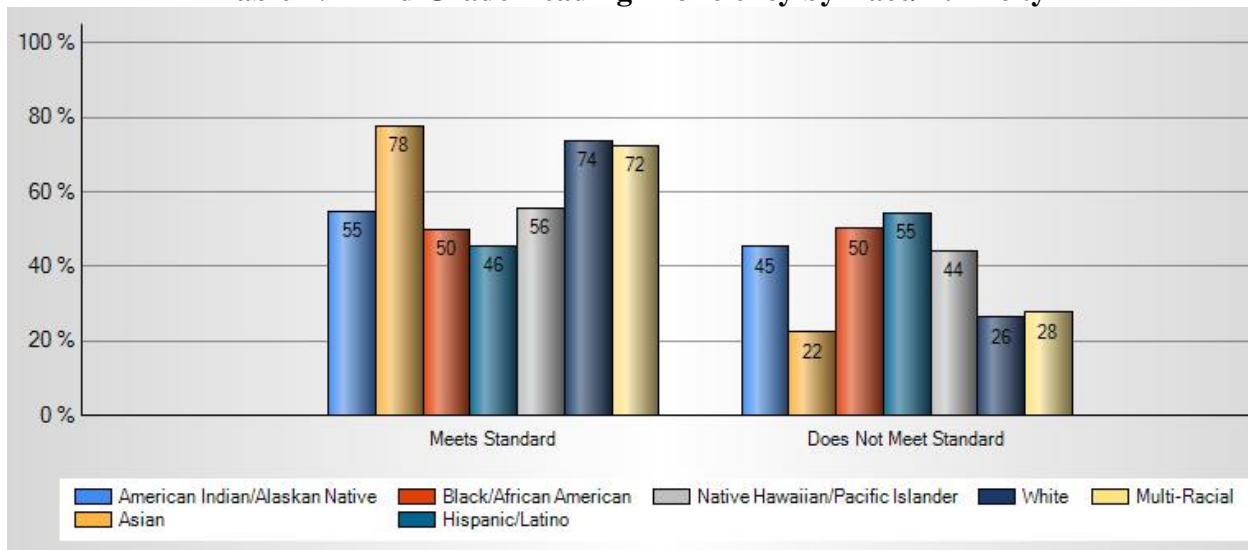
Oregon's best opportunity for distinction and success in the global economy of the 21st century is creating a world-class education system that starts early and produces results. Three years ago the state adopted the ambitious 40-40-20 goal: by 2025, 40% of adult Oregonians will earn a bachelor's degree or higher, 40% will earn an associate degree or post-secondary credential and 20% will earn a high school diploma or equivalent.

To achieve this goal we must dramatically transform the way our education system does its work. Consider the results our current system is getting:

- In 2013, 33% of entering kindergartners could name five or fewer letter sounds and 14% couldn't name a single letter.
- In 2013, 37% of entering kindergartners could not identify a single letter sound.
- Additionally, based on teacher observation in the statewide kindergarten assessment, 25% of entering kindergartners did not regularly demonstrate self-regulation skills such as staying on task or following directions.
- Oregon is in the bottom 25% for 3rd grade reading proficiency and high school graduation.

The data on third grade reading – an important predictor of future academic success – and high school graduation rates for children of color are even more alarming¹:

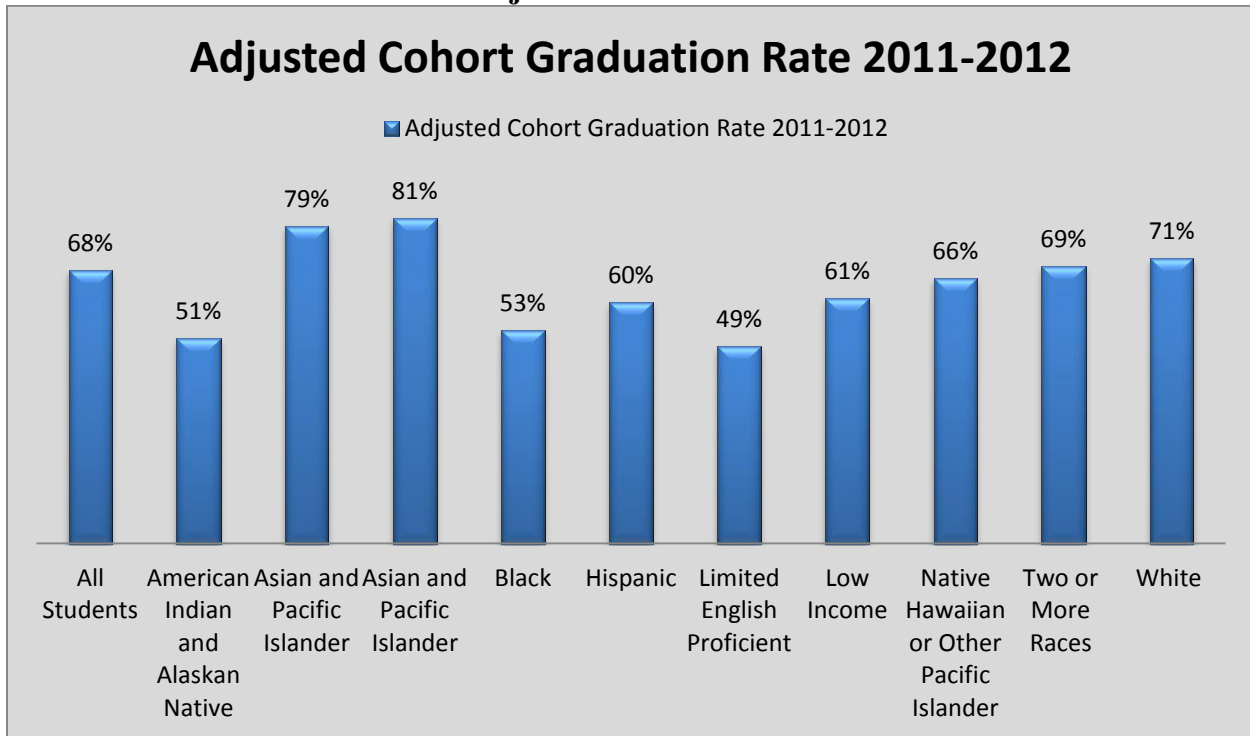
Table 1: Third Grade Reading Proficiency by Race/Ethnicity



Source: Oregon Department of Education Data Explorer

Four-year cohort graduation rates in Oregon are equally troubling, whether looking at total graduation rates (68%) or disaggregated graduation data by subgroup. The widest educational disparities are again found in our African American, Latino, Native American and low-income populations (see Table 2.)

¹ Currently 68% of our 3rd graders are measured proficient in reading statewide.

Table 2: Adjusted Cohort Graduate Rate

Source: US Department of Education, Education Data Express

These results will not build the future workforce Oregon needs to sustain its economy into the future. Achievement gaps this large set far too many children off course. The greatest opportunity to close these gaps is to strengthen our approach to early learning and prevent them from ever opening in the first place.

Every year about 45,000 children are born in Oregon. Roughly 40% of these children are exposed to a well-recognized set of socio-economic, physical or relational risk factors that adversely impact their ability to develop the foundations of school success. Without access to support and prevention/intervention services, these children will be off track, almost from birth, for academic and economic success.

Quality early care and education can address these risks – preventing or mitigating them before children enter kindergarten. The sensitive period for cognitive functioning and other key aspects

Stimulating early experiences lay the foundation for later learning; impoverished early experiences can have a severe and long-lasting detrimental effect on brain capabilities and learning.

of brain development related to learning and educational success are in the first 5-6 years of life. The quality of a child's early environment and the availability of appropriate experiences during this early period are crucial in determining how well a child will be able to think and to regulate emotion -- a fact with large implications for how well a child performs in school and later in the work force.

It is vitally important that families and early learning providers take advantage of opportunities early in the developmental building process to provide high quality care

and early learning environments. To support them in their work, Oregon needs a logically designed, easy to access early learning system that families can navigate and that connects them to the supports that will best support children during this time of sensitive and critical brain development. We do not currently have this system in our state, despite decades of spending and process.

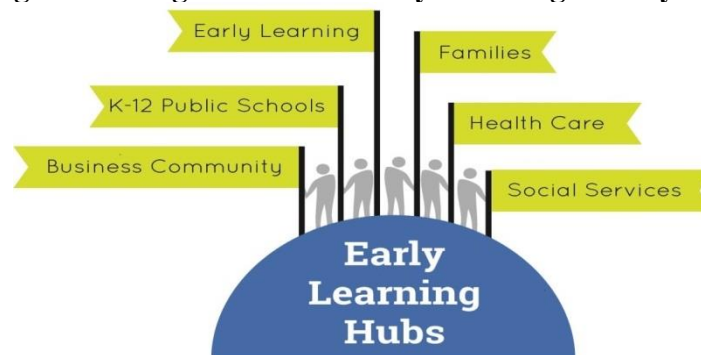
Historically, Oregon has spent almost \$400 million each biennium on services for children ages 0 through 5 and their families². In addition to the state's investment there are a wide range of federal, public, private and non-profit programs and services similarly focused on families of young children. Although many of these independent programs and services do good work, they have traditionally worked in isolation from one another and from state services, creating a disjointed approach to the early care education of our children—one that is not integrated, cost-effective nor accountable for results.

Figure 1: Oregon's Current Early Learning System



Recognizing that this uncoordinated approach would only serve to perpetuate Oregon's unacceptable results, Governor Kitzhaber and the Oregon Legislature set out to re-design the state's approach to early learning -- moving from a collection of isolated programs to a coordinated system, integrated across sectors, dedicated to the needs of children and their families, and focused on results. Early Learning Hubs are central to this new approach.

Figure 2: Oregon's Future Early Learning Hub System



² This figure does not include healthcare, K-12 and tertiary human services such as welfare, child protective services and behavioral health treatment.

Early Learning Hubs are self-organized consortiums with statutorily designated authority to integrate early learning services across systems and traditional geographic boundaries. The ultimate goal is to achieve higher levels of kindergarten readiness. While communities have the flexibility to design their own operational model and set of strategies – acknowledging that a “one size fits all” approach to transformation doesn’t work – each Hub shares the following responsibilities:

- Identify children at risk of arriving at kindergarten unprepared for school;
- Work with families to identify specific needs;
- Connect families to the supports or services that most meet their needs;
- Work across traditional silos; and
- Account for outcomes collectively and cost effectively.

Each Early Learning Hub is also responsible for the same set of outcomes:

- Increase kindergarten readiness.
- Increase family stability.
- Increase system coordination and efficacy.

As this report is prepared, the Early Learning Council (ELC) is negotiating contracts with the first set of Early Learning Hubs. This progress report contains information on the design and launch of the state’s first Early Learning Hubs – an exciting first step in moving from policy to implementation and action in our work to change the odds for Oregon’s earliest learners.

Creating Change: History of Redesigning Early Learning

Immediately following his election, Governor Kitzhaber convened an Early Childhood and Family Support Transition Team to deliver recommendations for a child-centered, accountable, coordinated system focused on the goal of ensuring at risk³ children arrive at kindergarten prepared to learn. This bipartisan team of educators, doctors, advocates, service providers, elected officials, parents and policy makers put forth a bold set of recommendations that, once implemented, would significantly improve the way our state approached early childhood education and support. A key component of the recommendations was the concept of a regionalized, cross-sector, community led structure for organizing early learning services toward kindergarten readiness.

These recommendations were further developed and enhanced by a 29 member early learning “design team” that include state agency staff, early learning experts, providers, and legislators during the 2011 session from across Oregon.

Building upon these recommendations to address the shared belief that “business as usual” was not delivering results, each Legislative session since 2011 has seen courageous steps taken to ensure the creation and improvement of a consistent approach to supporting Oregon’s youngest

³ “At risk” is defined as follows: A child who is at risk of not entering school ready to learn due to factors including but not limited to: living in a household that is at or near poverty as determined by federal poverty guidelines; living in inadequate or unsafe housing; having inadequate nutrition; living in a household where there is significant or documented domestic conflict, disruption or violence; having a parent who suffers from mental illness, who engages in substance abuse or who experiences a developmental disability or an intellectual disability; living in circumstances under which there is neglectful or abusive care-giving; having racial or ethnic minority status that is historically consistent with disproportionate overrepresentation in academic achievement gaps or in the systems of child welfare, foster care or juvenile or adult corrections.

children and their families. These steps included the following legislation, summarized here as they relate to Early Learning Hubs.

2011: SB 909

Senate Bill 909 created the Early Learning Council to oversee the design, development, and implementation of a true early learning system. SB 909 tasked the ELC with crafting an actionable set of policy recommendations for the 2012 session. The report prepared in response to SB 909 for coordinated service delivery built on the work of the Transition Team and Design Team, as well as further input and recommendations from a broad array of stakeholders including the Association of Oregon Counties, the Oregon Pediatric Association, the Oregon Head Start Association and the Commission for Childcare. The result was a set of 23 recommendations key to the development of what would become Early Learning Hubs, including:

SB 909:

- Created the Early Learning Council (ELC)
- Charged the ELC with recommending a plan to merge or redesign the delivery and coordination of early childhood services; and
- Charged the ELC with an implementation plan focused on future outcomes for children.

1. Eliminate the Oregon Commission on Children and Families.
2. Remove all statutory requirements imposed on counties related to county Commissions on Children and Families.
3. Require the Early Learning Council to integrate and align services, and set outcomes, standards policies and requirements for consistency across all early childhood programs.

4. Organize the delivery of services through what were then envisioned as “accountability hubs.”

2012: HB 4165

The Legislature took forward many of the recommendations from the SB 909 report and put them in statute in 2012 via House Bill 4165. HB 4165 directed an expanded ELC to take the following steps related to Early Learning Hubs:

- Streamline and improve early learning services through a regionalized structure then called “community based coordinators of early learning services.”
- Create a comprehensive children’s budget.
- Ensure children are ready for kindergarten.
- Implement a statewide Kindergarten Readiness Assessment

Following the passage of HB 4165 the Early Learning Council created its final structural proposal for the design and implementation of what would come to be called “Early Learning Hubs.”

2013: HB 2013

HB 2013 put in place the final pieces of statutory structure, timing and process requirements for establishing the following requirements for Early Learning Hubs. Hubs must:

- Coordinate the provision of early learning services to the community served by the Hub;
- Include service providers, parents, community members, county governments and school districts and other stakeholders in the creation of the Hub;
- Align services coordinated by the Hub with the services provided by public schools;
- Align services coordinated by the Hub with services provided by Coordinated Care Organizations and county public health departments;
- Integrate efforts across health, K-12 education, human services, early education and the business community using coordinated and transparent budgeting and through a governing body with representation of each of the above sectors as well as parents of children using early learning services;
- Demonstrate an ability to improve results for at risk children;
- Leverage additional private and public funds – including in kind support; and
- Keep administrative overhead at 15% or lower.

HB 2013 set forth requirements of the ELC:

- Establish Early Learning Hubs;
- Develop metrics for providing funding for Early Learning Hubs focused on community readiness; and
- Establish a baseline of information for each Hub coverage area.

With these final pieces in place, the Early Learning Council and the Early Learning Division (formed by HB 3234 in July 2013) were ready to begin implementation and launch of the Early Learning Hubs. A timeline of the early learning system transformation is illustrated in Figure 3.

Key Implementation Steps

As of this writing, initial implementation steps are actively under way. Transformation to Early Learning Hubs is proceeding in multiple phases. Phase one is complete, Phase Two is underway and Phase Three is expected to launch on time.

Table 3: Timeline of Early Learning Hub Implementation

Phase	Timeline	Key activities
Phase One	July 2013 – Oct. 2013	Community support and technical assistance. Round one request for Hub application (RFA) launch.
Phase Two	Oct. 2013 – Feb. 2014	Evaluation of awards. Contract negotiation. Contract awards.
Phase Three	Feb. 2014 – May 2015	Community support and technical assistance. Round two Hub RFA launch.
Phase Four	June 2014 – July 2014	Evaluation of awards. Contract negotiation. Contract awards.
Phase Five	Aug. 2014 – July 2015	Statewide implementation.

Phase One: Request for Applications

In August 2013, the ELC released the first round of request for applications (RFA) for Early Learning Hubs. The RFA required applicants to demonstrate readiness in the following ways:

- A comprehensive strategy with articulated return on investment, including a strategic vision/purpose and a five-year strategic plan outlining the Hub’s goals and strategies for ensuring strong outcomes.
- A defined coverage area and clear evidence of cross-sector coordination.
- A demonstrated understanding of the proposed coverage population, including equity, ability to serve at risk children and a clear ability to coordinate and integrate high quality services for these children.
- Business acumen and operational stability including an effective governance structure, the use of a comprehensive children’s budget and a realistic plan for financial sustainability.
- Accountability to outcomes, including clear baselines for each required metric and ambitious but realistic targets for improvement.

The ELC also established a clear set of improvement metrics aligned to each of three established outcomes for the early learning system and asked Hub applicants to set improvement targets for each metric.

Table 4: Early Learning Hub Outcomes and Improvement Metrics

Outcome	Improvement Metrics
Kindergarten Readiness	Increase the number of children served by high quality early learning environments as measured by the statewide Quality Rating and Improvement System.
	Improve readiness for kindergarten as measured by the statewide Kindergarten Readiness Assessment.
Family Stability	Increase the number of children who receive developmental screening prior to age 3. ⁴
	Increase the number of children with access to a patient centered primary care home (PCPCH).
System Coordination	Increase the number of at risk children served across the system.
	Decrease the cost of service (decreasing administrative overhead.)
	Decrease the age of onset services.

⁴ Screening and PCPCH metrics developed in partnership with Oregon Health Authority and shared by Coordinated Care Organizations and Early Learning Hubs.

Between July 29 and August 7, 2013 communities were offered technical assistance to help prepare for the launch of the RFA. The goal was to provide an overview of concepts important to the Hub RFA and to encourage them to start and sustain the hard work of system transformation. Technical assistance was provided in three primary ways: 1) a series of webinars focused on cross-sector collaboration, using data to drive decision making and community asset mapping; 2) a day-long statewide summit providing prospective applicants the opportunity to go deeper on webinar topics, as well as the opportunity to focus on the comprehensive children's budget and conflict mediation; and 3) following the release of the RFA, four applicant conferences were conducted in Medford, Bend, Pendleton and Portland.

Phase Two: Early Learning Hub Award

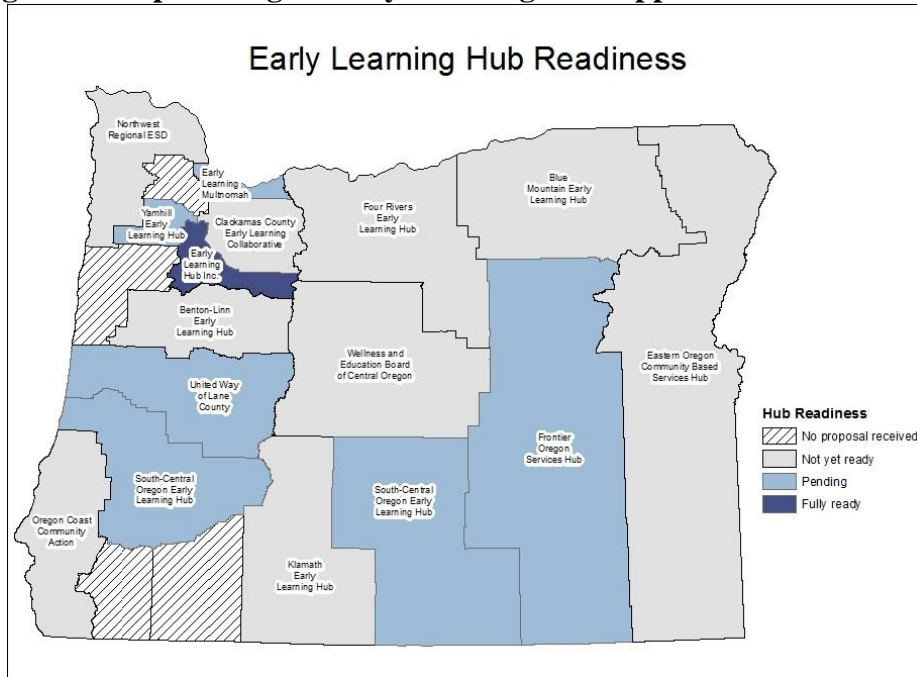
The RFA was open for 45 days. Fifteen communities across the state applied. Proposals were rated by an evaluation team of 26 reviewers comprised of ELC members as well as staff from the Oregon Health Authority, the Department of Human Services, the Oregon Department of Education and the Department of Administrative Services. A team of reviewers scored each section of the RFA. Final scores for each section were tallied and given to an Award Team for final consideration. The Award Team was comprised of two ELC members, the Early Learning System Director, the Deputy Chief Operating Officer for the state and the Governor's Labor and Human Services policy advisor. The Award Team was charged with reviewing each application and its scores, and making a recommendation to the full ELC.

Of the 15 applications received, the Award Team recommended, and the ELC agreed, to award one contract: Early Learning Hub Inc., covering Marion County. The ELC also determined they would enter into contract negotiations with five additional applicants and make awards based on Applicant's satisfactorily demonstrating readiness via additional supplemental information. Detailed information on each of these six Hubs is provided later in this report. A map of applicants and awardees is provided in Figure 3.

Negotiations are currently underway with:

- Frontier Oregon Services Hub, covering Grant and Harney counties;
- South Central Oregon Early Learning Hub, covering Douglas and Lake counties;
- Lane Early Learning Hub, covering Lane County;
- Early Learning Multnomah, covering Multnomah County;
- Yamhill Early Learning Hub, covering Yamhill County.

Figure 3: Map of Oregon Early Learning Hub Applicants and Awardees



Through this first round of applications the ELC gained a tremendous amount of insight into the current state of early learning services, cross-sector coordination and readiness to create, for the first time, a true early learning “system.” There is both cause for cautious optimism and need for increased clarity about the changes that must occur in early learning, as summarized in Table 5

Table 5: Early Learning Hub Applicant Strengths and Areas of Concern

Hub Applicant Strengths	Areas of Concern
<p>Wide geographic coverage: Nearly every region of the state was covered through the 15 applications received in round one.</p>	<p>Equity and family engagement: Applicants intellectually understood the importance of engaging families and closing service disparities for children of color and low income children, but actionable strategies for improvement were inconsistent or lacking.</p>
<p>Cross-geography partnerships: It is clear that in order for Early Learning Hubs to work, communities will need to partner across traditional geo-political boundaries. In Round One, nine out of 15 applicants (60 percent) represented a partnership between at least two geographies.</p>	<p>Continued need for cross-geography partnerships: While it is encouraging that so many communities were willing to work together in round one, partnerships need to increase in round two in order to achieve state coverage through up to 16 regional early learning Hubs. Communities that want to become Hubs must be willing to engage in non-traditional partnerships.</p>
<p>Cross-sector partnerships: Communities took the requirement to connect across sectors seriously and every applicant was able to get cross-sector representation to the strategic planning and partnership table at some level.</p>	<p>Moving cross-sector partnerships to cross-sector action: The ELC was pleased to see sectors beginning to partner. However, partners at Hub strategy tables will need to go further (including braiding funds across programs) in</p>

Governance structures and lead partners reflected new levels of engagement in early learning.	order to achieve success in implementation and achieve real cross-sector integration of practice, service and decision-making.
Clear understanding of outcomes: Communities absorbed the need for the Hub to achieve outcomes and most applications paid sharp attention to setting improvement targets that would represent a departure from Oregon's current mediocre results.	More sophisticated data analytic skills needed: While applicants are clear on the need for improved outcomes, a deeper level of sophistication is needed for how to use data to craft meaningful improvement strategies for those outcomes; data driven improvement skill was inconsistent or poor across the applicant pool.

Phase Three: Round Two RFA and Next Steps:

A second RFA is scheduled for release in late March 2014 in an attempt to reach full statewide coverage. However, the ELC remains concerned about the state of community readiness in many parts of the state. To address this concern, a second round of more intensive community support/technical assistance is being offered. Following the announcement of initial awards, Early Learning Division (ELD) staff talked with each unsuccessful applicant to collect feedback on the process and to help applicants better understand areas for improvement. Additional technical assistance is also being offered in the following ways:

- The ELD will conduct a series of webinars open to all interested parties, covering a range of topics including equity, family engagement, K-3 connections, health connections, and how to build a strong strategic plan.
- Community-specific technical assistance is available to prospective Hub applicants focused on deepening collaborative governance from verbal commitment to action and implementation; building an actionable strategic plan aligned to outcomes conflict mediation, and equity.

The following section of this report provides details on the vision, purpose statement, proposed coverage area/population, governance structure and strategic plan submitted as part of the RFA for each Early Learning Hub applicant that is moving forward in the contract negotiation process.

County transition to Early Learning Hubs

Under the former system of delivering early learning services through the Commission on Children and Families, each county in the state received funds for child and family services. Upon the creation on the Early Learning Division, control over five of these funding streams were transferred to the division: Healthy Families, Great Start, Relief Nurseries, Children Youth and Families and Family Preservation & Support Title IV-B2. Healthy Families funds go only to funding the Healthy Families Oregon home visiting program, Relief Nursery funds to only to funding the Relief Nursery program and the other funding streams are predominately used for programs that support early literacy and parent education.

In order to ensure service continuity during the change from the former commission system into Early Learning Hubs in fiscal year 2014, each county received their traditional funding allocation for these funding streams, with the exception of relief nurseries, and also received \$19,600⁵ to support counties to administer these funds for the last year of early learning service delivery through counties. Relief Nursery funding was changed in statute by HB 3234 to be delivered directly to the nurseries instead of going through the counties.

Beginning July 1, 2014 these funds will transfer to the Early Learning Division for administration of early learning services through Hubs. Because it is likely that not every community across the state will be covered by a fully contracted Hub on that date, the Early Learning Division has developed the following contingency plan for communities that were not awarded a Hub in round one of the application process:

- **For communities that enter into Hub contract award and negotiation:** Hub applicants will identify which former commission programs to continue funding based on outcomes achieved and importance to the Hub's overall strategy for kindergarten readiness. The ELD will hold these programmatic funds for the Hub during the contracting phase and then pass to the contracted Hub for administration.
- **For communities that are not awarded a Hub:** While the goal is statewide coverage, the ELC and ELD are aware that some communities may wind up without Hub coverage in the next phase. If this occurs the ELD will do the following:
 - Continue to administer Healthy Families Oregon through existing site administrators, transferring administration to Early Learning Hubs as they complete the contracting process with the state.
 - Continue to administer Relief Nursery funding through existing Relief Nursery contracts.
 - Hold back the following funding streams until the point a community reaches Hub readiness: Great Start and Family Preservation & Support Title IV-B2.

The ELD acknowledges this may cause service disruption and that there is concern about the impact of children and families if this happens. An analysis of how existing funds are presently used indicates that a majority of county funds currently go to the Healthy Families Oregon, a program the ELD is prepared to continue without interruption during the transition. In a few places, funds go to programs outside the scope and age range (0-6) within the purview of the ELD.

In a majority of counties, these funds are relatively small dollar amounts that go to community based non-profits that fund parenting programs or early literacy programs. While these are worthwhile goals, we cannot continue to fund programs in silos without regard to child

⁵ This figure represents both Early Learning Division and Youth Development Division funding that went to counties to provide support during the transition period.

outcomes, as evidenced by the results of the 2013 kindergarten assessment and Oregon's continually high rate of foster care.

Early Learning Hub, Inc.

A NOTE FROM EARLY LEARNING HUB, INC. LEADERSHIP:

Early Learning Hub, Inc. of Marion County has connected cross-sector partners who recognize the first 2,000 days of life as a window of opportunity to prepare young children for success in school and life. We also acknowledge that no one organization can solve the complex issues facing our youngest children and their families. Our value proposition to the community is in forming a needle-moving alliance that connects partners, sectors, resources, programs and families to ensure better outcomes for young children. We aim to synchronize the collective efforts of our Marion County communities, schools and partners towards shared goals with identifiable measures.

In 2013, community and service provider leaders came together to form this non-profit organization to take on the responsibility of becoming the early learning hub. For our community, this structure has provided a neutral organization to coordinate a cross-sector alliance that supports young children and families.

We appreciate the Legislature in their support of community-driven approaches to building public-private partnerships that support our youngest Oregonians. Recognizing the overwhelming cost of early education and care placed on parents, we strongly support funding and policies for early learning that reinforce equitable access to high quality early learning for all children and that provide economic incentives and supports for parents. We also recommend supporting communities by identifying approaches to funding that reduce silos at the state level and incentivize the braiding of funds

We thank the State and the Legislature for this opportunity to support the children and families of Marion County.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue Miller

Chair, Early Learning Hub, Inc.

Kara Waddell

Executive Director, Early Learning Hub, Inc.

VISION

Every child is safe, healthy and prepared to learn. Every family is strong and resilient. Early learning services are coordinated, effective and efficient.

PURPOSE

Early Learning Hub, Inc. (ELH, Inc.) is the coordinating body to identify resources focused on children ages 0 through 6 and their families and to help align resources toward high impact and shared goals of the community. ELH, Inc. is focused on the overarching outcome of increasing school readiness for children, especially at risk children, while supporting stable and attached families and ensuring a coordinated, efficient early learning system.

- We intend to represent the needs of young children and their families at the community, regional and state level.
- We operate under the principle of the “few but powerful” goals. We identify goals shared across communities with coordinated strategies and success metrics.
- We function as a backbone organization of a collective impact model. We intend to develop pathways to specific outcomes and goals.
- We operate under a prevention model and aim to focus our screening services on children ages 0-3 and their families.
- We are committed to communicating a message to families and our community that is relevant, clear and motivational.

COVERAGE AREA:

Early Learning Hub, Inc. serves Marion County, the fifth largest county in Oregon, and home to a diverse set of economic and cultural influences that impact families’ needs and their children’s early learning outcomes.

- 17.3% of Marion County’s population is living at or below the poverty level, which exceeds the state average of 14.8% (2011).
- 25.1% of the population is Hispanic compared with 12.2% statewide (2012).
- Of the K-12 population, 39.17% is Hispanic compared with a statewide K-12 average of 19.65% (2012).

Marion County is home to 32,574 children, approximately 76% of whom fit the definition of at risk for arriving at kindergarten unprepared to learn. Through its coordinated efforts, Early Learning Hub, Inc. will focus on service coordination for the area’s 19,427 children on the Oregon Health Plan⁶, representing 85% of the community’s at risk population. Of these children 5,581 speak Spanish as their primary language.

In addition to identifying its target population via OHP enrollment, Early Learning Hub, Inc. will further target its coordination efforts toward families and children living in Priority or Focus elementary school catchment areas.

⁶ Early Learning Hub Inc. is focusing on this population due to the high market penetration rate of OHP clients in the age range and risk category the Hub is tasked with serving.

GOVERNANCE

Early Learning Hub, Inc. is convened by a newly formed non-profit organization and governed by a board of directors. According to the Hub's bylaws, the board must have at least seven, and no more than 23 directors. To qualify as a director, a person must be an Oregon resident who does not currently hold an elected office. The board of directors is made up of three types of individuals: service providers, community and business representatives, and parents. The founding board currently includes service provider directors comprised of the chief executives of:

- Cascade School District
- Catholic Community Services of the Mid-Willamette Valley
- Chemeketa Community College
- Department of Human Services, Region Three
- Family Building Blocks (Relief Nursery)
- Marion County Health Department
- Mid-Valley Community Action Agency (Head Start, Child Care Resource & Referral)
- Oregon Child Development Coalition
- Salem-Keizer Coalition for Equality
- Salem-Keizer School District
- Western Oregon University's Teaching Research Institute (Quality Rating & Improvement System, Child Care Resource & Referral Statewide Coordination)
- Willamette Education Service District
- Willamette Valley Community Health, LLC (Coordinated Care Organization)

STRATEGIC PLAN

Early Learning Hub, Inc.'s goals and success metrics are outlined below:

OUTCOME: CHILDREN ARE READY FOR KINDERGARTEN:

Goal One: Children experience quality early learning and literacy development.

Success metric: By June 30, 2018, increase by 42% of number of children participating in quality early learning and care experiences as measured by the QRIS.

- **Strategy One:** Develop a community supply of 3 star, 4 star and 5 star quality rated early learning programs especially in targeted elementary school catchment areas.
- **Strategy Two:** Build upon the Regional Achievement Collaborative project to provide a cross-sector community response to program needs and gaps in successfully achieving a star rating.
- **Equity strategy:** Ensure children in families receiving child care subsidy assistance through TAND of ERDC have equal access to quality early learning programs in their vicinity.
- **Strategy for mobilization and communications:** Engage parents about quality early learning and the QRIS star rated programs to ensure parents make informed decisions.

Goal Two: Build connections between families, early learning and K-12 schools.

Success metric: By 2018 increase by 16% the number of children assessed who are ready for kindergarten as measured by the kindergarten assessment.

- **Strategy One:** Develop, scale and connect community, school and family approaches to language rich environments and the promotion of literacy in first languages.

- **Strategy Two:** Align and/or connect common learning standards, parent education and professional development systems for early childhood and k-12 professionals.
- **Equity strategy:** Train and engage parents, early learning and child care providers on the importance of primary language acquisition.
- **Strategy for mobilization and communication:** Engage parents with the skills their children need for kindergarten readiness, and engage parents, business and community members with information on critical brain development for children ages 0-3 and the return on investment for early learning.

OUTCOME: FAMILIES ARE STABLE AND ATTACHED:

Goal Three: Families are connecting to health care medical homes.

Success metric: By 2018 increase by 21.6% the number of children 6 and under who are enrolled in Patient Centered Primary Care Home.

- **Strategy One:** Work with health care sector to develop a cross-sector pathway to help ensure children and families without health insurance access a health plan and enroll in a PCPCH.
- **Strategy Two:** Build on the experience of the Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) approach of the CCO to improve care coordination across sectors. Develop a community corps of care coordinators.
- **Strategy using an equity lens:** Work with community leaders and points of contact that serve English language learners to connect families with health insurance and with a PCPCH for well child check-ups and developmental screening.
- **Strategy for mobilization and communication:** With input from families, surge forward on sharing child-level and family-level data and information by developing, training, distributing and using a universal opt out HIPAA compliant disclosure form.

Goal Four: Families and caregivers are developing skills that support children.

Success metrics: By 2018, decrease by 10% the number of children 0 through 6 who enter foster care, decrease by 10% the number of children under 0 through 6 who return to foster care and increase by 20% the number of children 0 through 6 involved with Child Welfare who are able to be served safely at home.

- **Strategy one:** Develop networks across systems that support parents and caregivers by providing evidence-based parent education and in home supports that promote family stability and child enrichment.
- **Strategy two:** Engage parents (and caregivers) as partners and first teachers with and for their children, connecting them with learning opportunities for themselves and their children.
- **Strategy using an equity lens:** Train and support culturally based in-home parent education and family support providers delivering services across systems.
- **Strategy for mobilization and communication:** Develop a compelling messaging platform customized for at risk families' communication preferences, and that links families with parenting tools, parent education and/or the universal screening and referral system.

Goal Five: Children are developmentally screened and referred

Success metric: By 2018 increase by 287% the number of children under 3 who receive general developmental screening and increase by 285% the number of children age 3 through 6 who receive general developmental screening.

- **Strategy one:** Develop a cross-sector pathway for universal referrals and care coordination for children and families that connects with and builds upon the statewide 211 and 211 Family Info referral system.
- **Strategy two:** Align and/or connect professional development systems and trainings across health, K-12, early learning and parent education to offer a consistent process, approach and message about the use of the ASQ and other developmental screenings.
- **Strategy using an equity lens:** Using natural points of contact in communities, educate families including English language learning families about the importance of screening and assessment for infants, toddlers and children.
- **Strategy for mobilization and communication:** Remove barriers and mobilize the CCO network, home visitors, and child care and early learning providers towards standardized use of the ASQ and sharing screening information for all children.

OUTCOME: SERVICES ARE COORDINATED AND EFFECTIVE

Goal 6: Child and family services are aligned and coordinated.

Success metric: By 2018 decrease the cost to serve at risk children including administrative overhead; increase by 2,642 the number of at risk children age 0 through 6 served; increase by 1.8% the number of children served by age 3. (Currently 95.5% of children are served prior to age 3.)

- **Strategy one:** Develop a cross-sector pathway for universal referrals and care coordination for children and families that connects with and builds upon the statewide 211 and 211 Family Info referral system.
- **Strategy two:** Identify and develop a community corps of cross-sector family resource managers who empower parents to lead and improve their child's health, development and learning.
- **Strategy using an equity lens:** Develop a locally focused comprehensive children's budget to inform targeted investments that support shared goals, to identify gaps, and to give a community snapshot of investment. Analyze budget allocations committed to populations disproportionately overrepresented in academic achievement gaps.
- **Strategy for mobilization and communication:** Advocate for the developmental needs of young children across sectors, mobilize broad-based support for early childhood services and cultivate a broad understanding of the criticality of the first 2000 days.

Goal 7: Performance is measured and data are used to learn, adjust and innovate.

Success metric: By 2018 decrease the cost to serve at risk children including administrative overhead; increase by 2,642 the number of at risk children age 0 through 6 served; increase by 1.8% the number of children served by age 3. (Currently 95.5% of children are served prior to age 3.)

- **Strategy one:** Increase the rate of achieving outcomes by improving the frequency and quality of conversations based on shared data while eliminating cycles of waste.
- **Strategy two:** Develop and improve performance-based contract management with quarterly contractor learning dialogues around shared data, outcomes, performance and administration.
- **Strategy using an equity lens:** Use performance data to learn, adjust and innovate for populations disproportionately overrepresented in academic achievement gaps.

- **Strategy for mobilization and communication:** Use child/family data and performance data to create ROI models and/or compelling information that communicates priorities and target investments.

Frontier Oregon Services Hub

The Frontier Oregon Services Hub is currently negotiating the content of its application with the ELC in order to sign a contract. The ELC will determine whether to award a contract to this Hub in February following a review of supplemental materials due January 31, 2014. The ELC has asked this Hub to provide a concrete strategic plan, including clear outcome baselines and more ambitious improvement targets, more detail on its cross-sector collaboration and service integration model.

VISION

All Frontier Hub children, birth through age six, will have access to quality early care and education programs that meet the needs of families. All Frontier Hub parents of young children will succeed in their role as their child's first teacher. All Frontier Hub children, birth through age six, will receive the necessary health, mental health, child care, early education, parent support, and resources to ensure they arrive at school with healthy minds and healthy bodies. All Frontier Hub early care and education providers will be appropriately trained in promoting and understanding school readiness; and the Frontier Hub will have an infrastructure that promotes, sufficiently funds, and holds accountable its school readiness efforts.

PURPOSE

The mission of the Frontier Hub is to create a coordinated system of community based services, prenatal through kindergarten, to achieve early learning outcomes that result in a high rate of kindergarten readiness.

COVERAGE AREA

The Frontier Hub will coordinate the management of early learning efforts throughout Harney and Grant counties. The Burns Paiute Tribe has also joined with Grant/Harney for inclusion as part of the geographic and service community.

The region, which covers over 15% of Oregon's geography and is one of the most isolated, most economically challenged regions in the state of Oregon is unique. As an example of the region's isolation, the Frontier Hub points out there is no Wal-Mart, Target or COSTCO anywhere within the 14,662 square miles of Hub territory. Few people live in the region and due to geographic distances many families are isolated. Poverty is wide spread across the region and high rates of unemployment suggest this will continue for the foreseeable future:

- The poverty rate is 18.5%,
- The number of children eligible for free/reduced lunch is 52.9%.
- Close to one-third of all children birth to 5 are low-income, according to the National Center for Children in Poverty.
- Another one third are considered economically challenged.

Surrounded by less isolated regions of the state, the Frontier Hub is truly its own region. At the same time, the region's isolation creates a sense of unity, neighborliness and teamwork among residents, strengths the Frontier Hub will build on when it launches and begins the work of coordination and service integration.

The region is home to 1,032 children ages 0 through 6, 774 of whom are at risk of arriving at kindergarten unprepared. As part of their frontier culture, many at risk rural families work to stay under the radar instead of accessing services that they qualify for. The percentage of children age 0 through 6 in this region who fall into this population has increased relative to the overall population numbers during the ongoing, sustained economic challenges the region is facing. Without successful interventions involving parents, educators, and caregivers, many of these children, by kindergarten, fall behind other children in their social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development.

The Frontier Hub has identified two target populations for early learning investment in Harney and Grant Counties:

- Children of socioeconomic disadvantage.
- Children who live with multiple serious risk factors that could impact school readiness, including: children with special needs, families and children involved with multiple state agencies, parents with less than a high school education and children who are homeless or move more than once a year.

GOVERNANCE:

Harney County Court will act as the fiscal agent for the Frontier Hub on behalf of Harney and Grant counties and the Burns Paiute tribe. The Frontier Hub is governed by the Frontier Hub Advisory Board empowered by Harney County Court to direct the strategic activity of the Hub. The board is comprised of representatives from across health, early learning, K-12 education, human services, business leaders and parents. Representation on the board is as follows:

- Harney County Chair
- Three representatives from Harney County, including a representative from the Burns Paiute tribe.
- Three representatives from Grant County.
- A representative from each of the sectors named above.

Board members are appointed by Harney County Court following the submission of a letter of interest, resume and an interview by Harney and Grant Courts.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

The Frontier Hub determined the most effective regional strategies for ensuring kindergarten readiness involve a combination of continuing and expanding services that are currently working, creating new service approaches where needed, and pushing to more closely align and integrate services across the region:

- Continue the effective work of existing early learning services.
- Implement improved screening and assessment practices.
- Increasing home visiting for at risk families.

- Increasing parenting programs for early learning success.
- Incorporate increased family resource management functions into the local system.
- Support and incentivize preschools, families and child care providers to work toward kindergarten readiness.

The Frontier Hub has set the following high level goals. Prior to making an award, the ELC has asked for more detail on how these goals will be achieved as well as a clear one year operating plan:

- Increase the number of children ready for kindergarten.
- Children raised in stable and attached families.
- Services integrated and aligned into one early learning system focused on results.

Year One: Form advisory board, hire staff, establish outcome measure and baseline data, strategize and refine the draft plan, continue to fund existing services (home visitation and quality preschools), continue to fund Head Start, which directly addresses the low income at risk children, improve coordination of quality of screening, assessment and referral practices across the region., conduct RFP Process and award performance-based contracts to successful providers.

Year Two: Implement improved screening and assessment practices, increase capacity for home visitation, early education, and family resource management functions.

Year Three: Formal assessment of outcomes and metrics, focus on increasing kindergarten readiness outcomes among child care providers, improve education and provide tools to help child care providers work toward kindergarten readiness for their children, as needed, secure high quality professional grant writing services to generate funding for added capacity and services.

Years Four and Five: Continue major grant writing efforts to secure appropriate funding, major focus on shifts in the hub comprehensive budget, major focus on respite care issues.

South Central Oregon Early Learning Hub

The South Central Oregon Early Learning Hub is currently negotiating the content of its application with the ELC in order to get to final readiness and sign a contract. The ELC will determine whether to award a contract to this Hub in February following a review of supplemental materials due January 31, 2014. The ELC has asked this Hub to provide a more concrete strategic plan, more detail on its connection to the health care sector and provide more insight into its work with Lake County.

VISION

Families, early childhood professionals, schools, business and faith leaders, healthcare providers, and others will work in partnership to (1) assure services and supports are readily accessible; (2) employ evidence-based/promising practices and innovative approaches that lead to improved outcomes for young children and their families; and (3) address the cultural and linguistic needs of at risk and traditionally underserved young children and their families.

PURPOSE

Develop a coordinated, effective system of early learning services that equips young children with needed skills for success in school and in life.

COVERAGE AREA

The South Central Oregon Early Learning Hub will coordinate early learning services across Douglas and Lake counties. The total population of children ages 0-6 in the South-Central Oregon Early Learning Hub is 7,239, based on the 2010 census. The total population of at risk children ages 0 through 6 across the coverage area is 6,000 with 5,700 residing in Douglas County and 300 in Lake County. Risk factors that impact children in this population include:

- **Poverty:** Nearly 62% of Douglas County children were eligible for free/reduced lunch in 2012-13. Unemployment rates in July 2013 were 11% in Douglas and 11.9% in Lake counties, compared with 8% statewide.
- **Substance abuse and mental health:** According to the Oregon Health Authority, 6,572 persons in Douglas and 475 in Lake counties abused or were dependent on alcohol (2008-2010). In a 2011 study, 44.6% of 85 women receiving long-term clinic services reported smoking cigarettes and 25.3% reported taking drugs during pregnancy (including marijuana, meth, and prescription drugs). Eighty percent of families enrolled at Family Development Center reported being raised by a parent affected by alcohol or other drugs; 83% of parents had a history of mental illness; 57% reported mental health issues facing their children.
- **Abuse and neglect:** Compared with 13.4 per 1,000 statewide, Douglas County's 2011 rate of child abuse and neglect victims was 18.5 per 1,000, while Lake County's rate was 25.4 per 1,000.
- **Developmental delays:** A 2013 snapshot of 226 children with disabilities in the Hub region found that 128 have a communication disorder, 72 a developmental delay, 11 an orthopedic impairment, 8 with Autism Spectrum Disorder, and 7 hearing or vision impaired.

GOVERNANCE

The South-Central Oregon Early Learning Hub is built on a flexible governance model, empowering satellite communities to develop local models for effective service delivery, while assuring accountability for outcomes and quality standards. This approach makes this Hub capable of expanding to incorporate other satellites.

The South Central Oregon Early Learning Hub is convened by Douglas Education Service District (DESD), which is guided by an elected board of directors. Community Governance Councils in each satellite community will guide in the work of the Hub in each satellite area and focus on system design within the comprehensive budget. Each Community Governance Council is made up of representatives from health, early learning, K-12, human services, the private sector, county government and parents. A Program Director and Program Assistant who will support cross-sector and governance work will staff DESD's Office of Early Learning. Douglas Education Service District will serve as the lead agency to facilitate Hub functions across satellite communities, including

- **Administrative and accountability tasks:** audits, finance, procurement, contracts, human resources, risk management, and information technology for data analysis.

- **System design, resource development and comprehensive budget:** coordinates services and promotes evidence-based practices, designing local early learning systems that incorporate community-wide screening for healthy development, referrals to needed services, and delivery through family resource managers, raising funds, assuring accountable services to meet the needs of families with young children, and aligning early learning services with K-12, health care, and other sectors.
- **Community engagement:** promoting communication across early learning service organizations, along with sustaining collaborations; increase awareness of early learning; family engagement with family resource managers, and broad public support for early learning efforts.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The Hub's five-year goals for coordinating early learning services to improve kindergarten readiness outcomes are as follows.

Goal 1. Quality Child Care: Improve access to quality child care through implementing QRIS.

The Hub's objectives include conducting screenings by child care providers seeking enhanced tiers in the QRIS. The Hub's early learning strategy will also improve child care for children cared for by families, friends and neighbors.

Goal 2. Home Visiting: Expand and streamline home visiting services for families needing ongoing support, with family support workers acting as tutors and mentors for families.

Early learning partners envision a home visiting system in our region that bridges the existing population silos, and prioritizes children at highest risk with the goal of designing an evidence-based home visiting model where visits are possible for every family who needs such services.

Goal 3. Supports for Children with Disabilities or Delays: Expand coordination with community agencies and schools to enhance early learning for children with developmental disabilities or delays.

The five-year work plan includes objectives to enhance cross-agency knowledge and skills for inclusion that will benefit children with developmental disabilities or delays and their families. With early detection, children can improve kindergarten readiness.

Goal 4. Health Care Transformation: Execute agreements with CCOs serving the region so that health care and early learning overlaps are tightly coordinated.

The Hub's goal is that ultimately all Oregon Health Plan enrolled young children will participate in general developmental screenings. By building on this experience across the region with five coordinated care organizations, more young children in the target population will be referred to needed services through earlier identification and referrals.

Goal 5. Parenting Skills: Promote strong parenting skills, building on our successful parenting hub with a nine-year track record.

The Hub has four objectives: (1) Make parent education a community norm in our geographic region; (2) Assure parent education curricula are evidence-based and/or use proven practices; (3) Apply community engagement strategies that have been successfully deployed for parent

education more broadly to promote community engagement in early learning; and (4) Build on parenting outcomes assessed using the Parenting Skills Ladder evaluation instrument.

Goal 6. Academic Alignment: Align academic goals for children enrolled in preschools and child care with Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB) goals and targets; use Kindergarten Assessment data to inform academic alignment.

Targeted learning outcomes drawn from the state common core standards for early childhood (ages 3-5) include specific child outcomes in language, literacy, math, and science. Lake County will benefit from these initiatives as DESD assists with replication.

Goal 7. Cross-sector Alignment: Build on the existing strong collaboration among early learning and other partners.

Services will be better coordinated through aligned intake and screening tools, data collection methodologies, performance-based contracts, collective impact work through Community Governance Councils and Professional Advisory Committees, and effective project management to hold providers accountable through DESD's Office of Early Learning.

Goal 8. Service Capacity: Expand service capacity to meet the needs of at-risk young children and their families.

This Hub is focused on adding system capacity with Family Resource Managers (FRMs), expanding the existing family support workers identified in the region. These FRMs will deliver direct referral and support services to at-risk families. By integrating FRM resources across multiple early learning programs, with a strong commitment to cross-sector family support training, defined budget parameters, and accountability to outcomes, FRMs will help ensure results for young children and their families.

Goal 9. School Transitions: Develop common understandings and protocols to better coordinate transitions to kindergarten.

To better coordinate and promote seamless transitions to kindergarten, this Hub is building on the work of UCAN and Klamath Family Head Start; i.e., improving communication with schools and putting practices in place that will ease transitions for young children from preschools, child care and early learning services to kindergarten.

Goal 10. Professional Development: Strengthen early learning workforce qualifications and skills through partnerships with Child Care Resource & Referral agencies, workforce organizations, and higher education institutions.

The Hub and workforce partners will develop common expectations around knowledge and skills, curricula alignment, and expanded professional development opportunities for current and future early learning workers.

Lane Early Learning Hub

Lane Early Learning Hub is currently negotiating the content of its application with the ELC in order to get to final readiness and sign a contract. The ELC will determine whether to award a contract to this Hub in February following a review of supplemental materials due January 31, 2014. The ELC has asked this Hub to provide a concrete strategic plan and more detail on the plan for coordinating services in rural parts of the county.

VISION

The Lane Early Learning Hub (Hub)'s vision is a community in which all Lane County families, organizations, and neighborhoods are unified in an effort to ensure that all our children are safe, healthy, cherished and enter school ready to learn.

COVERAGE AREA

The Lane Early Learning Hub will serve the geographic region defined as Lane County, Oregon. Lane County is an urban/rural county of 4,553 square miles, spanning from the coast to the Cascades. Although 90% percent of Lane County is forestland, it is Oregon's fourth most populous county with an estimated population of 354,542 residents (U.S. Census Bureau).

There are approximately 3,900 children born in Lane County each year with 25,302 children ages zero through six years, and about 21,651 children ages zero through five. This Hub estimates that 40% of the young children in Lane County are at risk for compromised developmental and educational outcomes due to deficiencies in our current systems in serving families of color, low-income families and those accessing state assistance programs. Over half of all children entering kindergarten in Lane County do not meet the early literacy benchmark and approximately 30% of all kindergarteners are at high risk for failure read on grade level by the end of third grade.

The Lane Early Learning Hub will serve the 10,120 children at risk in the county, with a particular focus on finding and serving 6,495 of the highest-risk children and families before they enter kindergarten. Lane Early Learning Hub has identified a variety of risk factors facing this population of young children:

- The median family income in Lane County lags behind the Oregon Self-Sufficiency Standard for 2011, making it difficult to meet long-term financial stability needs.
- The rate of prenatal tobacco use by birth mothers in Lane County was 14.5% in 2010, as compared to the state average of 11.3%.
- The rate of child abuse and neglect in Lane County is 15.4 per 1,000 as compared to 13.4 for Oregon.
- Compared to state averages, Lane County has disproportionately high rates of low birth weight infants, unemployment and domestic violence.
- 21% of Lane County residents are uninsured.

GOVERNANCE

The Lane Early Learning Hub governance model consists of the following levels of authority and accountability:

- **Backbone Support Organization:** United Way of Lane County (UWLC) serves as the backbone support organization for the Lane Early Learning Hub. As such, UWLC will provide the staff, resources and skills to convene and coordinate participating organizations.
- **Governance Consortium:** A twenty-member Lane Early Learning Hub Governance Consortium serves as the governing body of the Lane Early Learning Hub. Membership includes representatives from Lane County government, a parent representative and five designated community sectors: health, K-12 education, early education and pre-kindergarten, social/human services, and business and community leaders. The role of the Governance Consortium is to remove barriers by changing institutional policies, fostering cross-sector alignment and integration, and making outcomes-based investments in early learning programs and services.
- **Work Groups:** Lane Early Learning Hub Work Groups will address specific priorities of the Early Learning Hub. Membership will be multi-sector and include representation from the Governance Consortium. A local researcher or expert in the field will lead each Work Group. Recommendations regarding policy and funding will flow from the Work Groups to the Governance Consortium.
- **Early Learning Stakeholders Group:** In preparation for the development of the Lane Early Learning Hub, UWLC convened the three primary early childhood-focused groups: Success By 6 Leadership Team, Early Childhood Planning Team and the LaneKids Steering Committee. During a facilitated two hour work session, these groups agreed to combine into one group to support the Early Learning Hub. It will meet monthly in the first year of the Early Learning Hub to receive updates from the Governance Consortium, provide feedback, network with colleagues and participate in professional development opportunities.
- **Parent Advisory Council:** The Parent Advisory Council will include a diverse group of parents from across Lane County who will provide information and feedback to the Work Groups and Governance Consortium.
- **Rural Advisory Council:** The Rural Advisory Council will include a diverse group of parents and service providers from rural and outlying areas of Lane County who will provide information and feedback to the Work Groups and Governance Consortium. The Hub is working with the CCO to share governance of a Rural Advisory Council that serves the CCO and the Hub.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Lane Early Learning Hub has established the following five year goals:

- Increase the number of children participating in quality early learning and care experiences, as measured by the QRIS.
- Increase the number of children under age three who receive general developmental screening, as reported by Lane County's Coordinated Care Organization (Trillium Community Health Plan) and Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education (Early Childhood CARES).
- Increase the number of children age three through six who receive general developmental screening, as reported by Trillium Community Health Plan, other local health plans and service providers.

- Increase the number of children age six and under who are enrolled in a patient centered primary care home, as reported by Trillium Community Health Plan, other health plans and service providers.
- Decrease the number of children under age six entering foster care, as reported by the Department of Human Services (DHS).
- Decrease the number of children under age six returning to foster care, as reported by DHS.
- Increase the number of children who are able to remain safely at home while receiving services, as reported by DHS.
- Increase the number of at-risk children served across early education, health and human/social services, as reported by DHS and partners.
- Decrease the cost to serve at-risk children including administrative overhead.
- Decrease the number of substantiated cases of abuse and neglect, as reported by DHS.
- Decrease the average number of times a child moves foster homes, as reported by DHS.

To accomplish these goals, the Hub has outlined the following work plan. Please note the ELC has asked this Hub to submit a more detailed and clear work plan prior to executing a contract to fund the Hub:

Year 1: Officially convene Governance Consortium, Work Groups, Stakeholders Group, Parent Advisory Council and Rural Advisory Council; Identify additional Work Groups; Work with providers and partner agencies to develop consistent data collection processes to track the number of children who receive services from multiple agencies; identify additional measures and methods of tracking; develop and enact data sharing agreements; Assess service capacity, using improved data collection and sharing; Develop better understanding of service utilization (dose, intensity, frequency, duration); Review best practices and current literature; Define, assess and train Family Resource Manager functions; Identify and contract with programs for investment.

Year 2: Develop and implement outreach methods to reach children and families in need of services; Use GIS mapping techniques to map where at-risk children and families are in Lane County; Use improved data collection and sharing to identify areas of duplication and opportunities for service coordination; Reduce duplication and leverage increased capacity to reach additional families; Expand outreach to families; Make strategy and implementation adjustments based on data; Invest in evidence-based programs; Collect and monitor reports.

Year 3: Use data collection and sharing to identify areas of duplication and opportunities for service coordination; Reduce duplication and leverage increased capacity to reach additional families; Expand outreach to families; Make strategy and implementation adjustments based on data; Collect and monitor reports; Evaluate and develop plans for Years 4 and 5.

Early Learning Multnomah

Early Learning Multnomah is currently negotiating the content of its application with the ELC in order to sign a contract. The ELC will determine whether to award a contract to this Hub in February following a review of supplemental materials due January 31, 2014. The ELC has asked this Hub to provide a more concrete strategic plan, a clear decision making protocol and more detail on the Hub's connection to health care and its regional CCOs.

VISION

Every child in Multnomah County is prepared to succeed in school and life, regardless of race, ethnicity or class.

PURPOSE

Eliminate racial and social disparities in kindergarten readiness and create opportunities for success by implementing environmental level changes that align programs, systems and funding in early childhood with a focus on children living in poverty and all children of color.

COVERAGE AREA

Early Learning Multnomah's (ELM) service area will align with the county's boundaries, a 465 square mile area that includes 6 major school districts (Centennial, David Douglas, Gresham-Barlow, Parkrose, Portland, and Reynolds) and six cities (Portland, Fairview, Gresham, Maywood Park, Troutdale, and Wood Village). The smallest county by land area in Oregon, Multnomah County is home to approximately 760,000 residents, or about 20% of the state's total population.

ELM has identified 66 of Multnomah County's 171 census tracts with significant numbers of young children from populations who are frequently not prepared to succeed academically. An estimated 34,158 0 through 6 year olds, live in these high-risk census tracts. This figure represents the best current estimate of the population at risk for not entering school ready to learn. ELM has identified a set of needs unique to this population, guiding the Hub's strategies for improving outcomes:

Table 6: Early Learning Multnomah Strategies for Improving Early Childhood Outcomes

Category	Identified Population Needs
Early Childhood Care and Education Needs	Accessible community programs, services and resources with capacity
	Spaces and facilities appropriate to the needs of young children and families
	Supports for transition to Kindergarten.
	Enhanced supports for Family, Friend, and Neighbor child care.
	Affordable child care.
Family Support Needs	Community gathering spaces and parenting network opportunities.
	Access to basic needs and employment services for parents.

	Affordable, accessible transportation.
	Affordable, family friendly, neighborhoods.
	Parent mentors.
Social Emotional Development Needs	Services for children with disabilities and mental health needs.
	Providers and systems aligned with best practice in evolving ACES work and its impact on development.
	Respite care.
	Prevention and early intervention.
Health and Wellness Needs	Nutrition – affordable/healthy food and education.
	Access to healthcare.
	Mental health/substance abuse treatment for parents.
	Community shelters.
Early Childhood System Needs	Accessible culturally/linguistically appropriate services.
	Address persistent disparities experienced by families of color.
	Services in neighborhoods where at-risk children live.
	Services that follow children who move frequently.

GOVERNANCE

ELM's governance model is designed to reinforce the Hub's purpose of aligning programs, systems and funding in order to eliminate racial and social barriers to kindergarten readiness, by engaging critical decision-makers, including parents, directly in managing our work. The Hub will do this by balancing three diverse accountability bodies and supporting a set of key communities of practice.

- **Parent Accountability Council:** Made up of current caregivers of 0 through 6 year olds, with an emphasis on representation from communities of color and low-income families. This group will provide guidance and accountability for Hub staff – ensuring that the actions and outcomes of this work are aligned with the interests of the people they are intended to benefit.
- **Investment Council:** Made up of key funders of early learning services and associated services for children 0-6 and their families. This council includes representatives from the five sectors identified as mandatory by statute. (Early Learning, K-12, Health, Social Services, and Business).
- **Community Accountability Council:** Made up of community partners and providers in the early learning field, including at least one representative from each identified community of practice. Similar to the Parent Accountability Council, this group will provide guidance and accountability for Hub staff and actions. The Community Accountability Council is the venue for collaboration across communities of practice.

- **Communities of Practice:** These are groups of individuals that share the same kind of early childhood practice including early care and education, Kindergarten and 1st Grade teachers/district leadership, pediatric primary care, home visiting, early childhood mental health consultants. ELM Staff will support each of these communities, unless an existing group and support is already in place and can be effectively incorporated into our work.

Each of these councils brings a critical level of authorization and decision-making (funding, service provision, and engagement in services). By weighing these as equal inputs into the overall system decision-making process, the Hub acknowledges the multiple decisions that have to align in order to move the system.

STRATEGIC PLAN

At the core of ELM's model is a commitment from six existing initiatives and over 50 programs to align strategies and outcomes towards a single vision of kindergarten readiness for the county's most at risk children ages 0 through 6. The existing initiatives, which includes All Hands Raised's Ready for Kindergarten (R4K), Schools Uniting Neighborhoods (SUN) Service System, Multnomah Project LAUNCH, and the Children's Initiatives' EarlyWorks, will align federal, state, county, city, and foundation funding towards the goal of a single, streamlined early learning system focused on results.

Given the diversity and complexity of Multnomah County's service system, this work will require a multi-year coordinated effort formed around the following five-year goals:

- Focus early learning resources and strategies on addressing the identified needs of the most at risk families with children 0-6, living in poverty, English language learners, and all children of color.
- Create and support accessible and high quality services for high risk children 0-6 and their families.
- Align and integrate early learning initiatives and services towards a single, results driven, early learning system.

The goals outlined above are at the heart of ELM's plan to ensure services are integrated and aligned into one system capable of using resources more efficiently for better results. However, before the ELC will grant and fund a contract with ELM, the Hub is required to submit a more detailed strategic plan outlining specific strategies, detailing how it will achieve its five year goals and what its highest leverage year one focus will be.

Yamhill Early Learning Hub

Yamhill Early Learning Hub is currently negotiating the content of its application with the ELC in order to get to sign a contract. The ELC will determine whether to award a contract to this Hub in February following a review of supplemental materials due January 31, 2014. The ELC has asked this Hub to provide a more concrete strategic plan, clarity about its governing body and more detail on the Hub's connection to the K-12 community.

VISION

All young children and their families have access to quality, coordinated resources that support their growth, development, and a healthy life trajectory.

PURPOSE

Work collaboratively to support coordinated systems that are child-centered, family friendly, and community-based to meet the needs of the Yamhill County population and communities.

COVERAGE AREA

The Yamhill Early Learning Hub will cover Yamhill County in the same footprint as its sponsoring organization, Yamhill County Coordinated Care Organization. There are 7,625 children ages 0 through 6 in the Yamhill Early Learning Hub coverage area and 5,961 of them are at risk of arriving at kindergarten unprepared for school. The Hub plans to serve at minimum 60% of these children (3,577) by the end of its second year of operation. By the end of the fifth year of operation the Hub plans to serve 80% (6,100 children) of the at risk population.

GOVERNANCE

Yamhill CCO is a non-profit corporation whose management, control and operation are vested in its Board of Directors who represent diverse interests within the local communities of its members. Three advisory councils guide the Board of Directors in best practices to meet the needs of the population it serves: the Clinical Advisory Panel (CAP), the Community Advisory Council (CAC) and the soon to be established Early Learning Council (ELC).

Decisions related to early learning will come from recommendations of the Yamhill Early Learning Council (ELC), who possess the knowledge and expertise in providing early learning services, to the Yamhill CCO Board of Directors. Decisions will then be made by a simple majority vote of the Board of Directors. Core duties related to early learning system design, performance management, outcomes tracking and contracting will be fully delegated by the Yamhill CCO Board of Directors to the Yamhill ELC. In this sense, the Yamhill ELC will hold a key voice in the vision and implementation of how to improve early learning outcomes with Yamhill County. The Yamhill CCO Board of Directors will maintain fiscal responsibility for the overall financial performance of the corporation, as well as monitoring the work of the various councils (CAP, CAC and ELC) to confirm that they intertwine with each other.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Prior to awarding a contract or providing funding to Yamhill Early Learning Hub, the ELC is requiring the Hub to provide a clearer and more actionable strategic plan, building on the goals and strategies presented in their application, detailed for this report below.

Yamhill Early Learning Hub has created a framework of goals for families and the community that support and promote the healthy development and well-being of young children. The targeted goal is that all children enter kindergarten safe, healthy and prepared to succeed. Long-term indicators of success include:

- Communities support and promote the healthy development, school success and well-being of families with young children
- Stable and attached families support and promote the healthy development, school success and well-being of young children.
- Education, health and social service systems provide coordinated care.
- Children are socially, emotionally and physically healthy.
- Children are on track to meet Common Core State Standards in third grade.

The Hub believes that that community-wide attention on ten short term goals will support the reduction of the number of at risk children in Yamhill County and over time lead to achievement of the above long-term goals. Identified short terms goals include:

- Increase parenting skills, knowledge of child development and positive attachment in families with children prenatal to age 8.
- Reduce risk factors for child maltreatment and increase the 5 protective factors that help children and families thrive.
- Increase amount of time parents and caregivers read and talk with their child in order to develop strong attachment, language and literacy skills.
- Increase the number of licensed child care and early learning programs committed to improving quality at tier 2 and above.
- Families make more informed decisions and have access to affordable, quality child care options.
- Establish a system where all children in Yamhill County receive a developmental screen by the age of 36 months.
- Implement a universal referral system for all home visiting programs.
- Increase number of oral health prevention services conducted annually.
- Reduce toxic stress by promoting five key strengthening family protective factors in the children's home and neighborhood.
- Provide classroom opportunities for children in the year before kindergarten that align with Common Core State Standards.

Based on research from Harvard's Frontiers of Innovation and the Center for the Study of Social Policy, the following family protective factors will be incorporated into all goals:

- Families demonstrate parental resilience, knowledge of parenting and child development, and positive relationships that nurture their children's social and emotional competence.
- Families participate in positive social networks that provide multiple opportunities for mutual support and leadership development.
- Families access concrete support that meets their needs, including high quality services and opportunities for economic and educational success.

CONCLUSION:

Even with the momentum created by the launch of Early Learning Hubs, there is a significant amount of work yet to do in order to build an aligned system focused on results. As the second round of Hub applications begins, the ELC will maintain a strong focus on community readiness to do this important work in new and innovative ways. In 2014 the ELC has the responsibility to ensure Early Learning Hubs cover each community across the state. The Council has an additional 10 contracts to award toward that end, and strongly encourages communities across the state to partner in ways that cross traditional geographic boundaries and strengthen cross-sector collaboration.

While there is great urgency to act and to implement our new system, the Early Learning Council remains steadfast in its belief that substantial change is necessary to achieve the outcomes laid out in statute. As it moves forward with implementation, the Early Learning Council will be resolute and unconditional in its focus on achieving outcomes – knowing that means changing what’s always been done.

Future work calls for a significant focus on understanding cross-sector service disparities for underserved and high-risk children, including children of color, children living in poverty, and children in rural parts of Oregon. Future work will also need to deepen coordination -- from basic cooperation seen in initial applications to true integration of services across sectors. Substantial effort will be needed to sustain the momentum for changing our course and, importantly in tight fiscal times, ensuring that every dollar is maximized through braiding and blending of funds across programs and sectors.

The next 18 months of implementation will be a challenge, but the innovation, pioneer spirit and creativity Oregonians are known for will emerge as more communities leave their safe harbors and understand our new course of coordinating and delivering accountable early learning services that result in kindergarten readiness.