

EARLY LEARNING WASHINGTON COUNTY GOALS

Children are ready for school and are reading at grade level by the 3rd grade.

Families are healthy, stable and attached.

Early learning services are coordinated, efficient and effective.

*A partnership between
United Way of the
Columbia-Willamette &
Washington County Health
and Human Services*



Testimony To Joint Ways And Means Subcommittee On Education: Funding for Early Learning Programs in SB 5516 – March 15, 2017

Co-Chair Monroe, Co-Chair Smith Warner and Members of the Committee:

My name is William Thomas. I am Director of Early Learning Washington County, a partnership based in Hillsboro between United-Way of the Columbia-Willamette and Washington County Health and Human Services (HHS). This partnership was designated as a regional Early Learning Hub in November 2014. I am here today to testify on how the early learning landscape in Washington County has changed since the creation of Early Learning Hubs; to briefly describe our Hub's accomplishments over the past two years; and to urge, at a minimum, that funding be continued at current service levels for all critical State investments in early learning programs contained in the Governor's Recommend Budget and SB 5516.

Transformation: The new system of Early Learning Hubs has transformed the early learning landscape in Washington County. The governance of our Hub, with mandated participation by variety of sectors, is **broader and more effective** than the old system of local Commissions on Children and Families. There is a **clearer and sharper focus** on-addressing the needs of at-risk children from prenatal through age 6 and their families, as well as significantly **greater statewide accountability**. Moreover, there are **new partnerships**, the partnerships are **deeper and more genuine**, and there is **greater ownership and willingness to collaborate on common goals and strategies** to ensure that systems are aligned, that children and families are healthy and stable and that young children are ready to succeed in school.

Alignment and Coordination: Our Hub has developed a broad-based **governance structure** supported by Hub Coordination funds, including active participation by parents, and representatives of business, culturally specific organizations, early childhood providers, health care CCOs, human and social services, and K-12 school districts. This governance structure includes a Steering Committee, a Parent Advisory Committee, an Equity Advisory Committee, and an Operations Team. Our Hub is fully committed to **community and family engagement and voice** in our decision-making.

Moreover, our Hub is committed to application of an **Equity Lens** in all of our resource allocations and strategies, to ensure that our work is focused on **reducing disparities and improving outcomes for priority populations of children** who are “furthest from opportunity”. These include children of color, children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English language learners, and children from homeless, migrant, immigrant and refugee families. Finally, our Hub has identified 25 highest need (out of 79) elementary school catchment areas that include majorities of children of color and majorities of low-income families, out of which 16 areas include a majority of Latino children. **Our Hub has targeted its limited resources and services to these 25 highest need catchment areas and rural areas.**

Early Learning Washington County
155 North First Avenue, Suite 250, MS-6
Hillsboro, OR 97124
503-846-4539

Over the course of the 2015-17 biennium, Early Learning Washington County will have used funds appropriated in SB 5516, as well as leveraged private and public funds, for promoting:

Family Health and Stability

- To support our CCOs, Health Share and FamilyCare, in increasing the percent of children on OHP who receive a **developmental screen before the age of 3 from 49% to 66.5%**
- To support our CCOs, Health Share and FamilyCare, in increasing the percent of children on OHP who make it to 6 or more **well child visits by 15 months of age from 54% to 68.7%**.
- To support **screening for 1,000 families and home visiting services to prevent child abuse for 300 at-risk families**, through Healthy Families funds contracted separately to HHS.
- To support a **Coordinated Referral System for children prenatal to 3**, using leveraged funds for central intake and referral to home visiting and maternal and child health programs.
- To support our Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) partner in increasing the number of early childhood providers that have a **Quality Rating Improvement System/Spark 3-, 4- or 5-Star Rating from 17 serving 874 children to 53 providers serving 2,599 children**.
- To support two **Focused Child Care Networks for increasing Latino providers by 30**.
- To support the Department of Human Services in increasing the percent of **children in Employment Related Day Care in a 3-,4- or 5-Star QRIS program from 1.6% to 6%**.
- To support nine school district-based **Family Resource Managers**, including one focused on newcomer immigrant and refugee families, in **making over 12,000 connections** between children and families and **early learning, parenting education and family support services**
- To support **evidence-based parenting education class series for over 430 families**, through state funds and leveraging HHS Alcohol and Drug Prevention grants and Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative grants to HHS for implementation of a **Parenting Education Hub**;

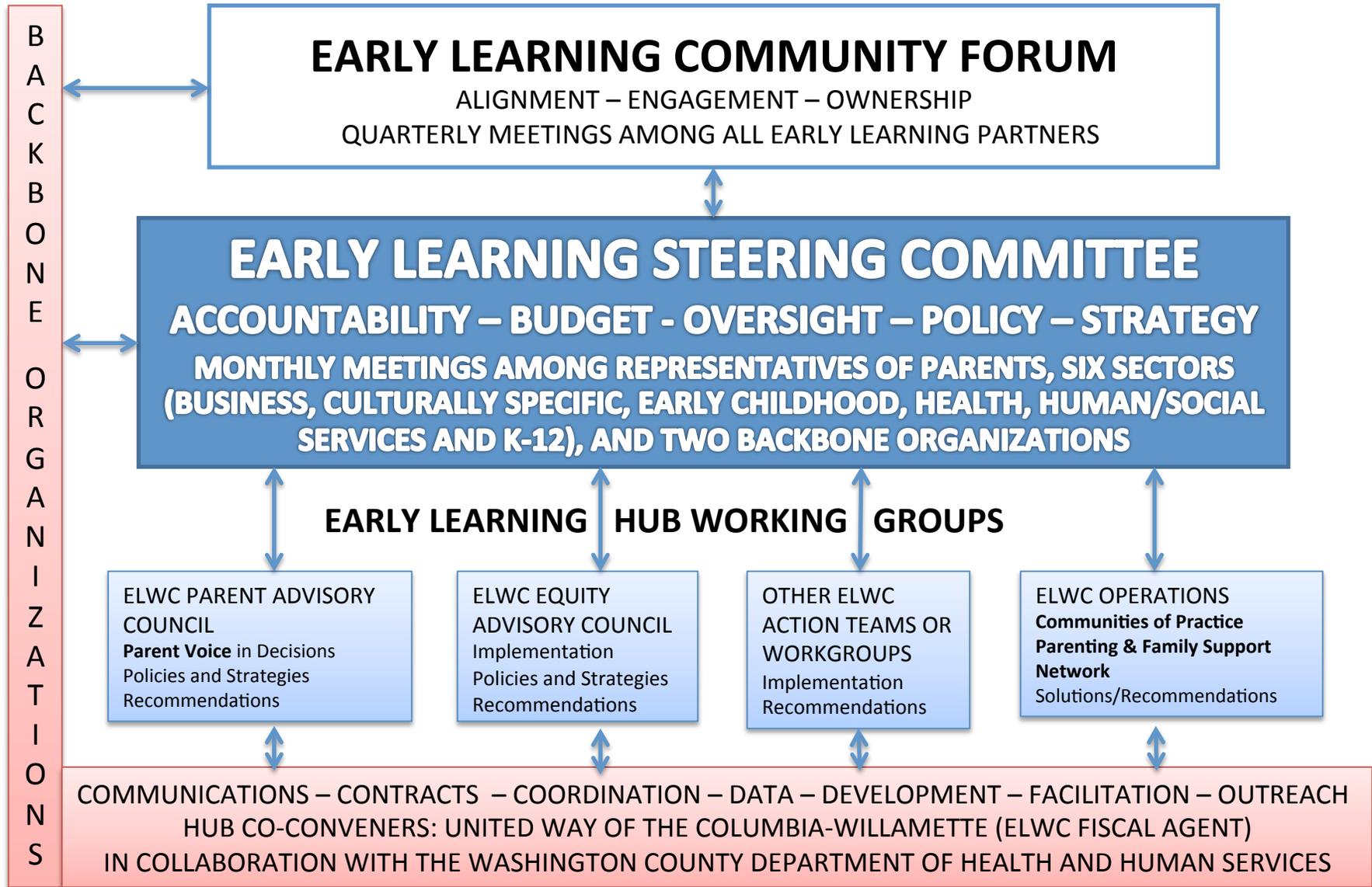
and School Readiness and Success

- To distribute, through State funds and a leveraged federal grant, over **7,000 early literacy book bags in six languages, mobile book libraries for 58 child care providers and 3,000 books for children and parents in six languages**, purchased for the Beaverton City Library.
- To develop and fund **15 affordable, high-quality mixed-income preschool classrooms** operated by seven child care, community-based, Head Start and K-12 providers, with **funds for 167 Preschool Promise slots leveraging \$1.3 million to fund an additional 129 slots**.
- To support a regional **kindergarten early enrollment campaign and earlier identification of children in need of additional services and supports** to be ready for Kindergarten.
- To support **kindergarten readiness, transitional and other services** that address needs identified by local Early Learning Teams, composed of schools and community partners.
- To train **nearly 500 teachers**, in all seven school districts, in implementation of **PAX Good Behavior Game**, an evidence-based **K-6 classroom model for promoting self-regulation**.

Continuation and Expansion of State Investments in Early Learning: None of the above initiatives would have been possible without funds appropriated in SB 5516. To that end, Early Learning Washington County urges the committee at a minimum to **continue at current service levels, and if at all possible expand, \$104,956,449 in critical State General Fund investments in early learning programs contained in the Governor’s Recommended Budget and SB 5516**, for funding Child Care Resource and Referral, Early Learning Division, Family Stability, Focused Child Care Networks, Great Start, Healthy Families, Hub Coordination, Kindergarten Readiness Partnership and Innovation, Preschool Promise and School Readiness. Thank you.

Early Learning Washington County (ELWC & PTWC) Governance Structure

Annual Review of Governance Structure



FOUNDATIONS

15-17 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK for Washington County

Children, Youth and Families, including
Early Learning Washington County and
Parenting Together Washington County

Goals:

- Services are aligned, coordinated and effective
- Families are healthy, stable and attached
- Children are ready for kindergarten, reading at grade level and successful in school

Equity Lens:

- Implement equitable policies and practices in programs, services and systems
- Reduce disparities and improve outcomes for priority populations of children and their families

Community and Family Engagement, Support & Voice:

- Strengthen community-based partnerships and family-centered programs, services and systems
- Embed community and parent voice in system development and decision-making

Universal Strategies with Targeted Resources:

- Implement universal strategies, with targeted resources for children living in the highest-need elementary school catchment areas & rural areas

KEY STRATEGIES

Alignment and Coordination

Sector Alignment: goals, strategies, services, funding & standards; data systems; professional development

Capacity Building: assure services & systems are culturally/linguistically responsive, family-centered, trauma informed and evidence-based

System Integration: early childhood, education, health & human services

Family Health and Stability

Healthy Development: infant, child and family screenings; home visiting services; affordable quality child care

Family Resource Managers: assess family needs; connect to resources; provide I & R, services and supports

Parent Education: classes; strategies & tips; workshops; parent awareness

School Readiness and Success

Early Learning: access to books; brain development; early literacy

School Readiness: affordable quality preschool; early identification and intervention; school readiness, P-3 alignment and transition strategies

Prevention & Wellness: prevention; self-regulation; healthy cognitive, emotional and social development