

Analysis

Oregon Department of Education - Early Learning Division

Child Care Resources and Referral Centers and Early Learning Hubs Consolidation

Analyst: Doug Wilson

Request: Accept a report on a study of the feasibility of consolidating Early Learning Hubs and Child Care Resources and Referral Centers (CCR&Rs).

Analysis: The Early Learning Division (ELD) of the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) depends on two sets of regional entities in carrying out its mission at the local level. Early Learning Hubs responsibilities include administering Focused Child Care Networks, subcontracting with providers, monitoring the Preschool Promise program, determining the needs of families relating to early learning, and coordinating early learning services across their service areas. Child Care Resources and Referral (CCR&R) centers deliver training and technical assistance to child care providers, assist providers in opening child care facilities, determine availability of child care providers, provide leadership for early learning administrators, provide input on provider selection, and assist providers through the Spark Quality Improvement Specialists. Their services areas don't always overlap making coordination more difficult. While they often work together in assisting providers and families in need of child care, their missions and activities sometimes overlap. The budget report for HB 5015, the primary budget bill for the ODE included the following budget note for ELD:

The Early Learning Division of the Oregon Department of Education will study the feasibility of consolidating Early Learning Hubs and Child Care Resources and Referral entities to better align its regional entities into one regional body while maintaining the scope, purpose, and legislatively intended function of both. The ELD shall report its findings to the Legislature before February 1, 2020. The report will include, at minimum, findings around fiscal and programmatic efficiencies, effect on organizational capacity, and anticipated effect on abilities to meet Early Learning Council designated outcomes. If the study determines that consolidation is deemed fiscally or programmatically efficient, it will present a plan to implement this consolidation as part of its report.

The report submitted at this time is only a progress report. Given the number of new initiatives included in the Student Success Act, bringing on approximately 50 new staff, rolling out a new information system for the Office of Child Care, and other responsibilities ELD has not had the chance to dedicated sufficient resources for this study. The Division has outlined the various steps it must take to complete the report including determining the required functions and services that must be maintained, determining the current organization and staffing of each entity, outlining the opportunities and challenges if consolidation was to take place, engagement of stakeholders, and gaining a deeper understanding of what such a consolidation would mean. ELD plans to complete the report in time for the 2021 Legislative Session.

Legislative Fiscal Office Recommendation: The Legislative Fiscal Office (LFO) recommends acknowledging receipt of the report.



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor



OREGON
DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Oregon achieves . . . together!

Colt Gill

Director of the Oregon Department of Education

January 17, 2020

The Honorable Senator Betsy Johnson
The Honorable Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward
The Honorable Representative Dan Rayfield
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
900 Court Street NE
H-178 State Capitol
Salem OR 97301-4048

Dear Co-Chairpersons:

Nature of Request

The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) and Early Learning Division (ELD) respectfully requests acceptance of a report required by a budget note in House Bill 5015 to study the feasibility of consolidating Early Learning Hubs and Child Care Resource and Referral entities to better align its regional entities into one regional body while maintaining the scope, purpose, and legislatively intended function of both.

Agency Action

The Early Learning Division (ELD) depends on two sets of regional entities in carrying out its mission. The first is Early Learning Hubs which are responsible for administering Focused Child Care Networks, subcontracting with providers, monitoring for the Preschool Promise program, determining the needs of families relating to early learning, and coordinating early learning services across their service areas.

The second entity, Child Care Resources and Referral (CCR&R) Centers, are responsible for delivering training and technical assistance to child care providers, assisting providers in opening child care facilities, determining availability of child care providers, providing leadership for early learning administrators, providing input on provider selection, and assisting providers through the Spark Quality Improvement Specialists.

The 2019 Legislature raised questions related to the services provided by each of these entities, as well as the possibility of these services overlapping and making coordination more difficult. While each entity often works together in assisting providers and families in need of child care, their missions and activities sometimes overlap. As such, the Legislature approved a budget note within House Bill 5015 as follows:

The Early Learning Division of the Oregon Department of Education will study the feasibility of consolidating Early Learning Hubs and Child Care Resources and Referral entities to better align its regional entities into one regional body while maintaining the scope, purpose, and legislatively intended function of both. The ELD shall report its findings to the Legislature

The Honorable Senator Betsy Johnson
The Honorable Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward
The Honorable Representative Dan Rayfield
January 17, 2020
Page 2

before February 1, 2020. The report will include, at minimum, findings around fiscal and programmatic efficiencies, effect on organizational capacity, and anticipated effect on abilities to meet Early Learning Council designated outcomes. If the study determines that consolidation is deemed fiscally or programmatically efficient, it will present a plan to implement this consolidation as part of its report.

In scoping the work necessary to complete a quality feasibility study, the ELD has carefully reviewed the various elements that will need to be considered and studied. As a result, the division has determined it will need more time to produce a quality report. In the meantime, the ELD has completed an outline of the various elements that will be included in the report. They are as follows:

- Background Information – An overview of each entity's legislative history, programmatic purposes, required functions and services, and benefits of those served.
- Current Landscape – An overview of each entity's organization and staffing structure, budget and financing, existing collaborations, and both monitoring and outcome measurement practices.
- Mandates and Changes – An overview of mandates and changes for both entities, as well as a summary of opportunities and challenges.
- Recommendation for Next Steps – Identification of recommendations based on stakeholder engagement, national best practices, analysis of data, and deeper understanding of alignment with other regional efforts.

The ELD will dedicate resources over the next 9-12 months to produce a final report for the 2021 Legislature. Once the final report is complete, it will be submitted to the Legislature through the appropriate process.

Agency Request

Accept this report required by a budget note in House Bill 5015 to study the feasibility of consolidating Early Learning Hubs and Child Care Resource and Referral entities to better align its regional entities into one regional body while maintaining the scope, purpose, and legislatively intended function of both. The final report will be made available to the Legislative Fiscal Office no later than December 31, 2020.

Legislation Affected

None

Thank you for considering the approval of this request.

Sincerely,



Colt Gill
ODE Agency Director

Sincerely,



Miriam Calderon
Early Learning Division Director



Preliminary Report on Regional Entities: Child Care Resource & Referral Entities and Early Learning Hubs

Report to the Legislature from the Early Learning Division

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary.....	2
Child Care Resource & Referral System	2
Early Learning Hubs.....	2
Recommendations for Further Reporting.....	3
Introduction	4
Regional Entities	4
Child Care Resource & Referral Regional Entities.....	4
Early Learning Hubs.....	4
Legislative History and Charge.....	5
Child Care Resource & Referral System	5
Early Learning Hubs.....	5
Comparison of Charge.....	6
Administration of Early Learning Hubs and CCR&Rs	6
Budget and Description of Activities.....	6
Areas of Overlap and Roles.....	7
Capacity Building.....	8
Recommendations for Further Reporting.....	8
Appendix A. Map of Hubs and CCR&Rs	9
Appendix B. List of Backbone Entities – Child Care Resource & Referral Regional Entities	10
Appendix B. List of Backbone Entities – HUBS.....	11

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following report gives background and purpose for Early Learning Hubs and Child Care Resource and Referral Entities in relation to the following budget note included in the Early Learning Division's 2019-21 Legislative Approved Budget:

The Early Learning Division of the Oregon Department of Education will study the feasibility of consolidating Early Learning Hubs and Child Care Resources and Referral entities to better align its regional entities into one regional body while maintaining the scope, purpose, and legislatively intended function of both. The ELD shall report its findings to the Legislature before February 1, 2020. The report will include, at minimum, findings around fiscal and programmatic efficiencies, effect on organizational capacity, and anticipated effect on abilities to meet Early Learning Council designated outcomes. If the study determines that consolidation is deemed fiscally or programmatically efficient, it will present a plan to implement this consolidation as part of its report.

While the Early Learning Division (ELD) has worked to maintain separate functions between these entities, some overlap may remain. This report provides a description of each of the entities (16 Hubs and 13 CCR&Rs).

Legislative History and Charge

Child Care Resource & Referral System

The Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) system is the result of national grassroots movements in the 1960s and 1970s around building the supply of child care.¹ CCR&Rs were first codified into federal legislation in 1986 through Title XX legislation and most recently through the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Law of 2014. CCDBG provides the impetus for a CCR&R system in each state that provides information to families, helps communities build the supply and improve the quality of child care; and meet employers needs for adequate child care.²

Oregon state law mirror federal policy. Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 329A.100 through 329A.135 defines the CCR&R system for our state. This includes requirements for each entity within the CCR&R system to provide the following services, at minimum:

- a) Training and technical assistance for existing and potential child care providers that includes, but is not limited to, coaching, mentoring, consulting and advising on professional development;
- b) Referrals for parents or guardians seeking child care providers; or
- c) Recruitment of qualified individuals to meet the child care needs of a community.

Early Learning Hubs

In 2015, Oregon Senate Bill 213 (creating ORS 417.827) and the 2015 Oregon Legislature codified the Early Learning Hub system into law after the completion of a two-year "demonstration project". This legislation established 16 regional Hubs across the state. Each Hub was required to engage partners

¹ Child Care Aware of America. 2018. "Child Care Resource & Referral: The Secret Solution" <https://info.childcareaware.org/blog/child-care-resource-referral-the-secret-solution>

² Ibid.

from five sectors: early care and education, human services/mental health, health, K–12 education, and the business/private sector. A backbone agency that is responsible for fiscal and operational accountability from one of these sectors and a governing body that is responsible for multisector coordination oversee each Hub.

The legislation created the mandate for each Hub to:

1. Create an aligned, coordinated, and family-centered system of early learning services;
2. Increase coordination and collaboration among entities involved in, and providers of services related to, early learning services, education, and health and human services;
3. Increase the focus on outcomes relate to these areas; and

Improve outcomes related to these areas (e.g., improve school readiness; promote early learning within healthy, stable, and attached families)

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER REPORTING

The ELD is requesting additional time to complete its report to the Legislature around Hubs, CCR&Rs, and potential consolidation. In order to explore this opportunity fully, the ELD is requesting until December 31, 2020 to complete its report. This will allow time for stakeholder engagement and will allow time to adequately plan for this issue in a way that will not impact Student Success Act implementation negatively and will not interrupt work to strengthen each of these entities overall. Should the ELD recommend changes to this regional system, it wants to ensure these to be true. As it contracts to complete this report, the ELD is seeking to answer the following questions and welcomes the Legislature’s input on additional questions to be answered.

Research Questions for Final Report:

- Where is there remaining overlap in duties or functions (e.g., professional learning activities) and what is the rationale?
- What other funds do each entity receive within their community (e.g., from grants to philanthropy)?
- What other, non-statutory functions is each entity serving within its community?
- What is the alignment with other relevant regional efforts – Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative Parenting Hubs, Regional Educator Networks, Coordinate Care Organizations, Education Service Districts, etc.?
- How do staffing models support current functioning? What does an optimal staffing model look like for each and how, if at all, can those be combined?
- Is consolidation possible without significant negative consequences?
- What is national best practice around regional entities for early childhood?

Regional Early Learning Entities

INTRODUCTION

The following report gives background and purpose for Early Learning Hubs and Child Care Resource and Referral Entities in relation to the following budget note included in the Early Learning Division's (ELD) 2019-21 Legislative Approved Budget:

The Early Learning Division of the Oregon Department of Education will study the feasibility of consolidating Early Learning Hubs and Child Care Resources and Referral entities to better align its regional entities into one regional body while maintaining the scope, purpose, and legislatively intended function of both. The ELD shall report its findings to the Legislature before February 1, 2020. The report will include, at minimum, findings around fiscal and programmatic efficiencies, effect on organizational capacity, and anticipated effect on abilities to meet Early Learning Council designated outcomes. If the study determines that consolidation is deemed fiscally or programmatically efficient, it will present a plan to implement this consolidation as part of its report.

The ELD presents descriptive information about each entity. This report is meant to be a first step in grounding the conversation and the ELD is requesting additional time from the legislature to complete its full analysis.

REGIONAL ENTITIES

Child Care Resource & Referral Regional Entities

There are thirteen regional Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) entities within Oregon. These thirteen entities make up only a part of Oregon's CCR&R system, which also includes partnerships with

- Western Oregon University to operate a quality improvement system (i.e., Spark) and provide central coordination for the entire system,
- Oregon Center for Career Development at Portland State University for the administration of a workforce registry and the creation of training, and
- 211 for the operation of parent referrals.

For the purpose of this report, ELD will focus on the 13 regional entities across the state. A directory of these entities can be found in Appendix B and C.

Early Learning Hubs

There are 16 Early Learning Hubs (see below) across Oregon. These Hubs each have unique backbone agencies (Appendix C)

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY AND CHARGE

Child Care Resource & Referral System

The Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) system is the result of national grassroots movements in the 1960s and 1970s around building the supply of child care.³ CCR&Rs were first codified into federal legislation in 1986 through Title XX legislation and most recently through the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Law of 2014. CCDBG provides the impetus for a CCR&R system in each state that provides information to families, helps communities build the supply and improve the quality of child care; and meet employers needs for adequate child care.⁴

Oregon state law mirror federal policy. Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 329A.100 through 329A.135 defines the CCR&R system for our state. This includes requirements for each entity within the CCR&R system to provide the following services, at minimum:

- d) Training and technical assistance for existing and potential child care providers that includes, but is not limited to, coaching, mentoring, consulting and advising on professional development;
- e) Referrals for parents or guardians seeking child care providers; or
- f) Recruitment of qualified individuals to meet the child care needs of a community.

Early Learning Hubs

In 2015, Oregon Senate Bill 213 (creating ORS 417.827) and the 2015 Oregon Legislature codified the Early Learning Hub system into law after the completion of a two-year “demonstration project”. This legislation established 16 regional Hubs across the state. Each Hub was required to engage partners from five sectors: early care and education, human services/mental health, health, K–12 education, and the business/private sector. A backbone agency that is responsible for fiscal and operational accountability from one of these sectors and a governing body that is responsible for multisector coordination oversee each Hub.

The legislation created the mandate for each Hub to:

- 4. Create an aligned, coordinated, and family-centered system of early learning services;
- 5. Increase coordination and collaboration among entities involved in, and providers of services related to, early learning services, education, and health and human services;
- 6. Increase the focus on outcomes relate to these areas; and
- 7. Improve outcomes related to these areas (e.g., improve school readiness; promote early learning within healthy, stable, and attached families)

Figure 1. Early Learning System



³ Child Care Aware of America. 2018. “Child Care Resource & Referral: The Secret Solution” <https://info.childcareaware.org/blog/child-care-resource-referral-the-secret-solution>

⁴ Ibid.

Comparison of Charge

Hubs and CCR&Rs play distinct roles within the system. Hubs are responsible for coordinating the entirety of the early learning system – including Health, Human Services, K-12, Early Care and Education, and Housing and Community Supports, as well as engaging the business sector. Figure 1 represents this system. This includes roles to bring partners to a common table to coordinate services on behalf of children and families. It may also include collaborating with a CCR&R to build the supply of child care or work with businesses.

In contrast, CCR&Rs are primarily responsible for the Early Care and Education (ECE) sector and – by virtue of the way ECE programs are delivered – have a role within the K-12 system as well. This includes a role around supporting families to understand the system, but is primarily focused on training and technical assistance to the ECE workforce in family child care, child care, and other programs, as well as support to assist individuals or groups in navigating the process to start a child care business. This includes support to navigate the child care licensing system, among other duties.

ADMINISTRATION OF EARLY LEARNING HUBS AND CCR&RS

As stated previously, there are 16 Early Learning Hubs divided into regions. Five Hubs cover a single county – Washington, Multnomah, Lane, Clackamas, and Yamhill – and remaining counties are grouped by region.

The 13 Child Care Resource & Referral Entities are grouped in similar, but varying counties. The difference is primarily accounted for in Eastern Oregon, where one CCR&R entity is responsible for Baker, Grant, Harney, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, and Wallowa Counties. In contract, this area is broken into three distinct Hub regions. The ELD requested and received federal funding limitation to correct this.

Two Early Learning Hubs and CCR&Rs share a backbone agency: Northwest Education School District and Umatilla-Morrow Head Start.

Governance Hubs are required to have governing bodies with representatives from across the early learning system (represented in Figure 1, above). CCR&Rs do not have this requirement.

Monitoring Each entity receives onsite monitoring annually from ELD staff, as well as desk monitoring of financials. In addition, the Hub monitoring process includes feedback from partners from across the early learning system.

BUDGET AND DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

Funding for Regional Entities – 2019-21 Legislatively Approved Budget Overview

	General Funds	Federal Funds	Other Funds	Total
Child Care Resource & Referral Entities	\$1,500,000	\$22,753,195	-	\$22,753,195
Early Learning Hubs	\$15,041,667	-	\$2,901,235	\$17,942,902
			Total	\$ 40,696,097

Each entity received a reduction in General Fund in the 19-21 LAB. In addition, the CCR&R system received a significant increase of over 25% in funding compared to 19-21 CSL due to an increase in federal funding through the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF).

Child Care Resource & Referral System

2019-21 CCR&R Budget

As of the 2019-21 LAB, CCR&Rs are funded nearly exclusively with Federal Funds. Examples of CCR&R responsibilities include:

- Administering health and safety training with new providers
- Supporting Quality Improvement Specialists (QIS) to work with Focused Child Care Networks (supported by GF and FF) and other providers to complete their Spark quality improvement and self-assessment activities.
- Administering other training to help providers meet training hours throughout the year
- Supporting the supply of child care by helping providers navigate the system
- Maintaining accurate enrollment numbers for licensed child care providers
- Partnering with community colleges and universities to offer coursework
- Supporting infant and toddler educators through an infant-toddler focused Quality Improvement Specialist

Early Learning Hubs

The 2019-21 EL Hub Budget. Examples of Hub responsibilities include:

- Managing referral systems that support families to find services across the early learning system – from mental health to early care and education
- Supporting collaboration between partners by convening
- Convening stewardship bodies and completing regional Early Care and Education plans
- Preparing to coordinate applications and enrollment for preschool, including the Preschool Promise program
- Building data capacity within their region to analyze needs of families
- Providing support to parent/family-led initiatives, such as parent advisory councils
- Funding Kindergarten Partnership Innovation activities, such as kindergarten-readiness programs within schools and shared professional development across ECE and early grades educators in K-12

Hubs work to be responsive to the needs of their region. Each Hub provides unique services to their region in order to meet the needs of young children and their families.

AREAS OF OVERLAP AND ROLES

The ELD has been working to clarify and align roles between the regional entities, as well as build capacity in each role. As previously stated, the ELD is also working to better align geographies by adding additional capacity to Eastern Oregon. In the past year, ELD has moved administration of the Focused Child Care Networks (FCCN) – a strategy to create communities of practice primarily between Family

Child Care educators – primarily to CCR&Rs. The exception, as noted above, is within the Eastern Oregon Hub, which is challenged by geography and operated its own FCCN in order to effectively reach educators.

Capacity Building

Through the Student Success Act (SSA), the Hubs will build capacity in their ability to coordinate partners and engage families across the region. This primarily includes implementing HB2025, which clarified Hubs roles as conveners of coordinated enrollment in preschool programs across their community. This will include new FTE focused on this role, as well as capacity to bring Head Start and CCR&R partners together. In addition, Hubs completed ECE Sector Plans, which required them to convene families and other key partners within their region to identify priority populations for services, a key role of Hubs since their inception. With this responsibility came additional resources to gather input from their communities to

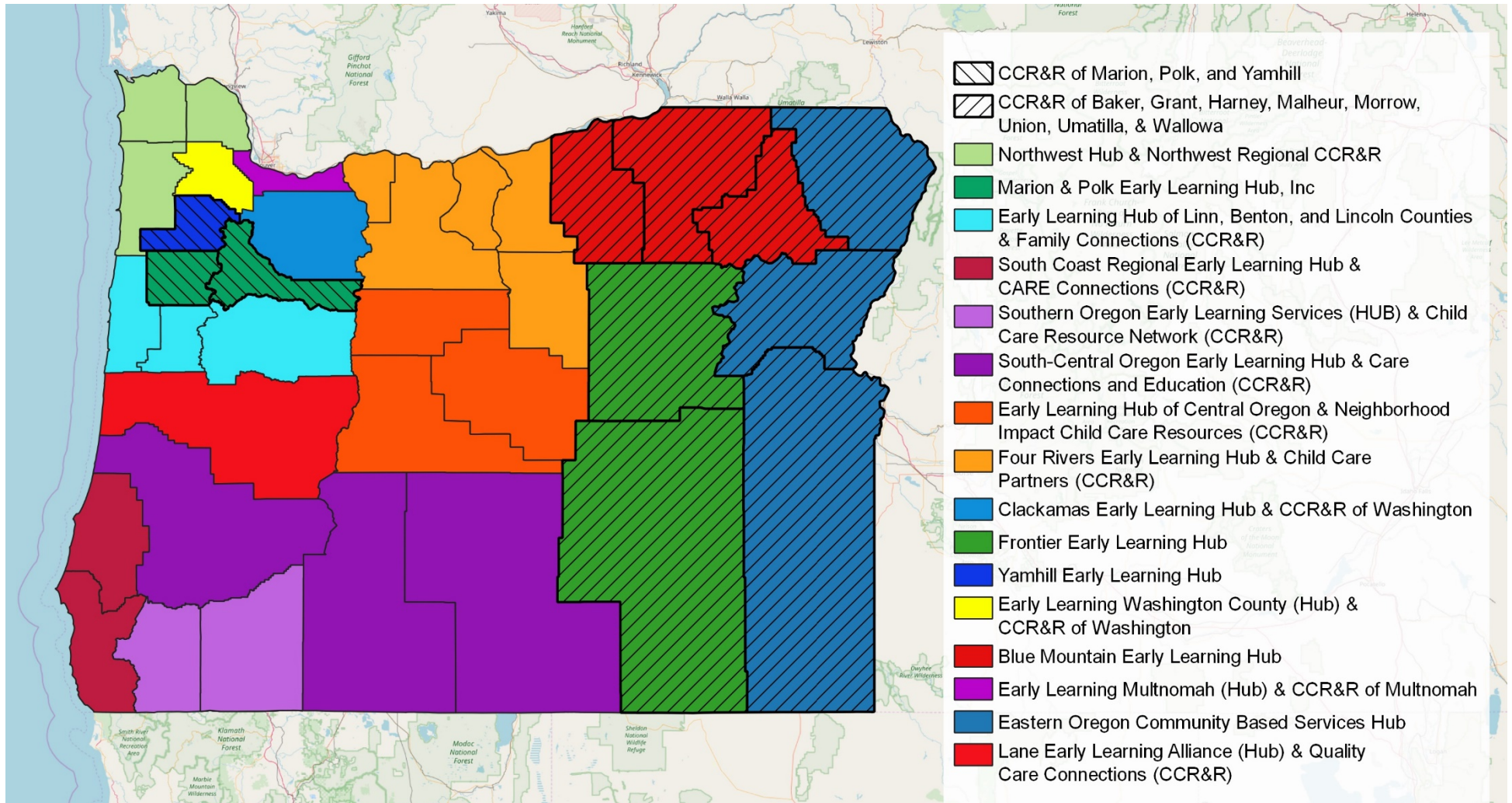
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER REPORTING

The ELD is requesting additional time to complete its report to the Legislature around Hubs, CCR&Rs, and potential consolidation. In order to explore this opportunity fully, the ELD is requesting until December 31, 2020 to complete its report. This will allow time for stakeholder engagement and will allow time to adequately plan for this issue in a way that will not impact Student Success Act implementation negatively and will not interrupt work to strengthen each of these entities overall. Should the ELD recommend changes to this regional system, it wants to ensure these to be true. As it contracts to complete this report, the ELD is seeking to answer the following questions and welcomes the Legislature's input on additional questions to be answered.

Research Questions for Final Report:

- Where is there remaining overlap in duties or functions (e.g., professional learning activities) and what is the rationale?
- What other funds do each entity receive within their community (e.g., from grants to philanthropy)?
- What other, non-statutory functions is each entity serving within its community?
- What is the alignment with other relevant regional efforts – Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative Parenting Hubs, Regional Educator Networks, Coordinate Care Organizations, Education Service Districts, etc.?
- How do staffing models support current functioning? What does an optimal staffing model look like for each and how, if at all, can those be combined?
- Is consolidation possible without significant negative consequences?
- What is national best practice around regional entities for early childhood?

APPENDIX A. MAP OF HUBS AND CCR&RS



APPENDIX B. LIST OF BACKBONE ENTITIES – CHILD CARE RESOURCE & REFERRAL REGIONAL ENTITIES

Local Child Care Resource & Referral Agency	County
Child Care Resource & Referral of:	Multnomah
Child Care Resource & Referral of:	Marion, Polk & Yamhill
Northwest Regional Child Care Resource & Referral	Clatsop
	Columbia
	Tillamook: 503-815-4448
Family Connections	Linn, Benton & Lincoln
Quality Care Connections	Lane
CARE Connections	Coos
	Curry
Child Care Resource Network	Jackson & Josephine
Care, Connections, Education	Douglas
	Klamath & Lake
Child Care Partners	Gilliam, Hood River, Sherman, Wasco & Wheeler
NeighborImpact Child Care Resources	Deschutes, Crook & Jefferson
Child Care Resource & Referral of:	Baker
	Grant
	Harney
	Malheur
	Morrow
	Union
	Umatilla
	Wallowa
Child Care Resource & Referral of:	Clackamas
Child Care Resource & Referral of:	Washington

APPENDIX B. LIST OF BACKBONE ENTITIES – HUBS

Hub Backbone Organization	Hub County Coverage
Early Learning Hub, Inc	Marion, Polk
United Way of Columbia-Willamette	Multnomah
United Way of Lane County	Lane
Douglas ESD	Douglas, Lake, Klamath
Yamhill Community Care Organization	Yamhill
Harney ESD	Grant, Harney
InterMountain ESD	Umatilla, Morrow, Union
Southern Oregon ESD	Jackson, Josephine
WEBCO	Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson
Washington County Health & Human Services	Washington
Malheur ESD	Baker, Malheur, Wallowa
Linn-Benton Community College	Linn, Benton, Lincoln
Northwest Regional ESD	Clatsop, Columbia, Tillamook
Clackamas County	Clackamas County
Oregon Coast Community Action	Coos, Curry
Sherman County	Hood River, Wasco, Sherman, Gilliam, Wheeler