

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain, members of the Education Subcommittee, my name is Amy Corbett, Chief Program Officer, Metropolitan Family Service. I am here today to offer my support for fully funding Early Learning Hubs in the 2021-2023 budget.

I have been on the Governance Committee of the Early Learning Hub of Clackamas County since 2017. Metropolitan Family Service is also a recipient of Early Learning Hub funding in both Clackamas and Multnomah Counties. Early learning hubs convene a multi-disciplinary group with representatives from community based organizations, early intervention and special education, DHS, business, school districts, relief nurseries, parents, public health, behavioral health and libraries to ensure that there is no wrong door for families to access the many services families with young children need. The Early Learning Hub of Clackamas County also reviews data through an equity lens to make sure that the right services are targeted to the families who need them most in the areas accessible to where they live. The Hub has also invested in two Equity Cohorts so that our governance team and partners could learn together how to be an anti-racist organization.

The Early Learning Hub system allows partners and families to plan together, coordinate recruitment for services and learn from the multidisciplinary group how to better meet the needs of families who live in our Hub's area. Coordination is key to using resources efficiently and working within a Hub allows this to happen.

Metropolitan Family Service receives funding from the Early Learning Hub of Clackamas County that we leverage with funding from the North Clackamas School District and foundations to provide a high quality, bilingual, parent/child kindergarten readiness program called Ready, Set, Go! Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) has grown from one to eight programs in the Portland metropolitan region through support of both the Clackamas Hub and Early Learning Multnomah. Children entering kindergarten who have attended RSG regularly do better than State and school district averages in the Approaches to Learning assessment of the State Kindergarten Assessment.

The Early Learning Hub of Clackamas County also supports the work of two MFS Family Resource Coordinators (FRCs) who are based in North Clackamas School District elementary schools and work with families who have children age birth to six. These FRCs have helped more than 70 families navigate the COVID-19 pandemic with health resources, food, mental healthcare, client assistance to pay bills, early learning activity boxes, and assistance connecting to technology. We were able to leverage COVID19 resources from the Oregon Health Authority to help pay for many needs our families had due to illness and loss of income.

I urge you to support full Early Learning Hub funding in the new biennium. The pandemic hit families hard and the needs were greater than ever. As families go back to work, they need high quality, safe childcare and education for their children so they can return to work and maintain employment. BIPOC families have been disproportionately impacted by the virus and the resulting economic insecurity. Full funding of the Hubs will ensure that families have resources they need when they need them and disparities can be eliminated.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my experience and concerns for our youngest community members.

Sincerely,

Amy Corbett