



Clatsop County

Public Health

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Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain, members of the Education Subcommittee,

Local public health recognizes that addressing early childhood education, maternal and child health, and supporting stable and attached families is foundational to a safe and healthy community. For this reason, I request the committee approve full funding of Early Learning Hubs in the 2021-2023 budget.

Since its advent almost a decade ago, the Clatsop County Department of Public Health works closely with the NW Regional Early Learning Hub. Their role as a local convener laid the groundwork for families accessing programming and services. The hub's role is to be nimble and adjust to local community needs. Hubs ensure providers of early learning services are accountable for outcomes and services provided in a cost-efficient manner. For local public health, this means working to collaboratively address the social determinants of health, such as access to quality early childhood education and child care and increasing social support such as home visitation and parenting education.

The current budget contains a \$1.4 million cut levied on hubs during a COVID-related special session to balance the budget. We are just beginning to understand the impact of the pandemic on families with young children. Families are struggling to care for their children while maintaining employment, and families who faced economic insecurity before the pandemic are experiencing the brunt of the last year. The trauma experienced today will have detrimental health-related implications in the future, evidenced in the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) study. A cut to the hubs will mean less support, services, and programs for those that need them the most.

Respectfully submitted,

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