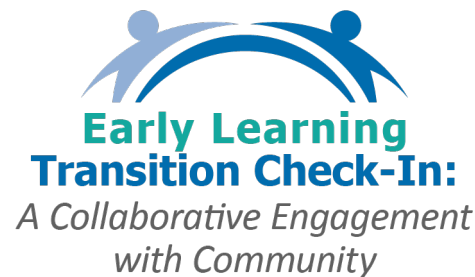


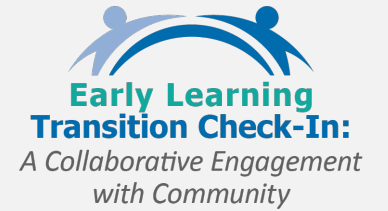
Family Conversation

Early Learning Transition Check-In: A Collaborative Engagement with Community

House Education Committee
May 2025



About Us



Oregon Department of Education (ODE)

ODE works in partnership with school districts, education service districts, and community partners.

MISSION: Oregon Department of Education fosters equity and excellence for every learner through collaboration with educators, partners, and communities.



Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC)

The Department of Early Learning and Care fosters coordinated, culturally appropriate, and family-centered services that recognize and respect the strengths and needs of all children, families, and early learning and care professionals.

MISSION: All children, families, early care and education professionals, and communities are supported and empowered to thrive.



Introductions ODE and DELC Staff



Oregon Department of Education

- **Sody Fearn**, K-2 Balanced Assessment Specialist
- **Mindi Helmandollar-Armatas**, PreK-3 Grade Coordinator
- **Andrea Lockard**, Director of Assessment and Student Reporting
- **Carla Martinez**, Administrative Support
- **Kai Tyler**, Survey Analyst
- **Julia Pacicco**, Psychometrician

Oregon Department of Early Learning & Care

- **Rachel Elliott**, Head Start Collaboration Specialist
- **Karina Guzmán-Ortiz**, Partner Engagement Specialist
- **Lauren Sigman**, Preschool Specialist
- **Lizzy Tremaine**, Research Analyst

Outcomes

Where have we been?

- Redesign
- Introduction to the Early Learning Transition Check-In
- Purposes

Where are we now?

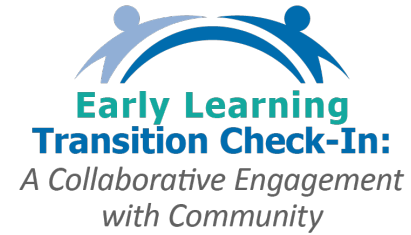
- Family Conversation Pilot process
- Data Analysis & Reporting Development

Where are we going?

- Links to other Oregon initiatives
- Preparing for Statewide Implementation

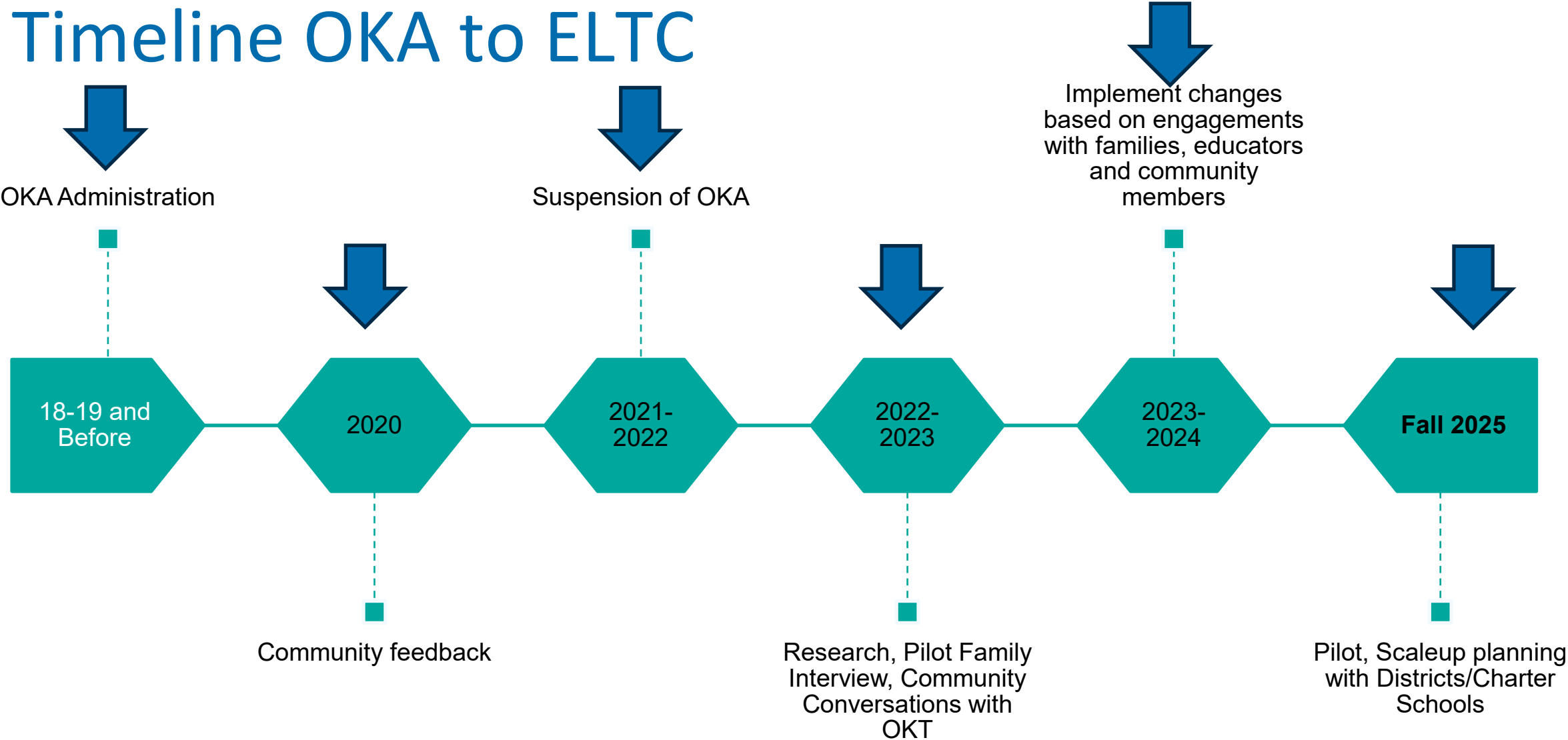
Questions?



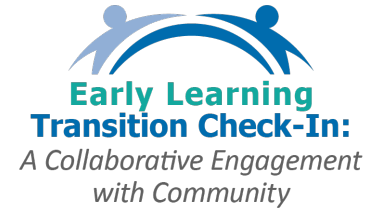


Where Have We Been?

Timeline OKA to ELTC



Family Conversation Pilots to Date



Fall 2022

- Nine schools / Nine Districts
- 300+ Families Participated
- Oregon's Kitchen Table Family & Educator Feedback

Fall 2023

- 30 Schools / Nine Districts
- 1000+ Families Participated
- Oregon's Kitchen Table Feedback
 - Family & Educator
 - Community Partner

Fall 2024

- 50 Schools / 15 Districts
- 1800+ Entries
- Educator Survey

Fall 2025

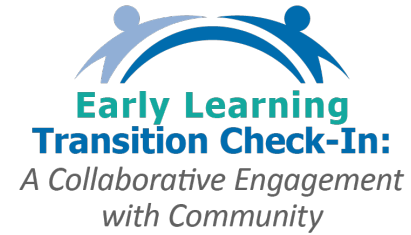
- 36 schools/12 districts (anticipated)
- Majority of districts are rural

What is the Early Learning Transition Check-In: A Collaborative Engagement with Community?



- Community engagement in **co-creation, a reimagined process**
- ODE and DELC are working in **collaboration** to respond to historical concerns about the former Kindergarten Assessment
- **Shifting focus away** from children's "readiness" for Kindergarten
- Creating a way to look at how **prepared** educators, schools, districts, communities, and **systems** are to support ALL children and families





Where Are We Now?

Family Conversation

- Each fall, Kindergarten educators will meet individually with each family entering their classes.
- The Family Conversation is a tool to support educators' conversations with families.



What it does:

- Collects information about families' early learning and care experiences
- Builds relationships among educators, parents/caregivers, and children

How it advances equity:

- Takes a more holistic view of children
- Provides context about families
- Shifts focus off children's "readiness"

Comparing the Family Conversation to an Interview

What it is...



Two-way conversation



Dedicated time to listen, and learn from children's first teachers



Creating space for connection with families to school staff and resources



One component of family engagement to support the transition to kindergarten

What it isn't...



Checklist



Time to complete academic measures



Quick, surface level Interview/Survey



Teacher led discussion



Transactional

Who has been participating in the Family Conversation?



2023 Fall Pilot Demographics

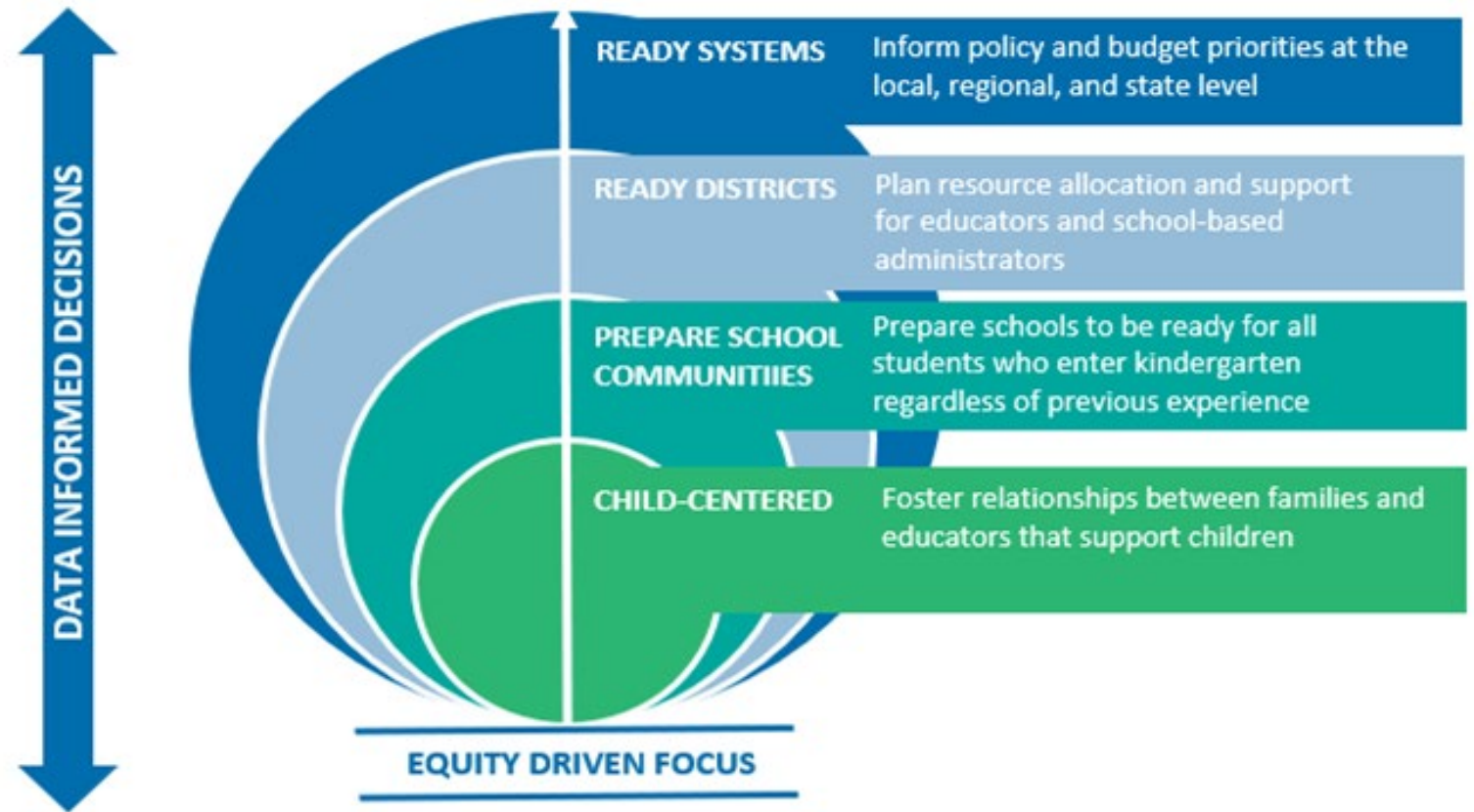
	Participation (%)
Gender	
Female	47%
Male	53%
Non-Binary	<5%
Race/Ethnicity	
American Indian/Alaska Native	<5%
Asian	<5%
Black/African American	<5%
Hispanic/Latino/a/x	32%
Multiracial	8%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	<5%
White	56%
English Learner	14%
Receiving Special Education Services	9%

What are we learning?

Data Analysis & Reporting Development

"I am really excited about the regional snapshot as a hub; we use it to inform programming (us and other partners). Barriers can help us identify adaptable solutions to support family's needs. We have been waiting for this."- Early Learning Hub Staff

ELTC Data Informed Decisions



Family Conversation Questions

The ELTC is designed to:

- help educators **connect with and learn about the children and families** entering their class
- **inform DELC and ODE about families' experiences** prior to starting Kindergarten

The ELTC uses two kinds of question types to reach these goals

- Open-ended questions allow for families to share their thoughts and experiences in their own words
 - e.g., “What are your hopes and dreams for your child?”
- Closed-ended questions allow for teachers to select from a list of common responses (informed from previous pilot iterations)
 - e.g., “What experiences, programs and/or services did your child receive or participate in to help them learn and grow?”

What story are the data telling us?

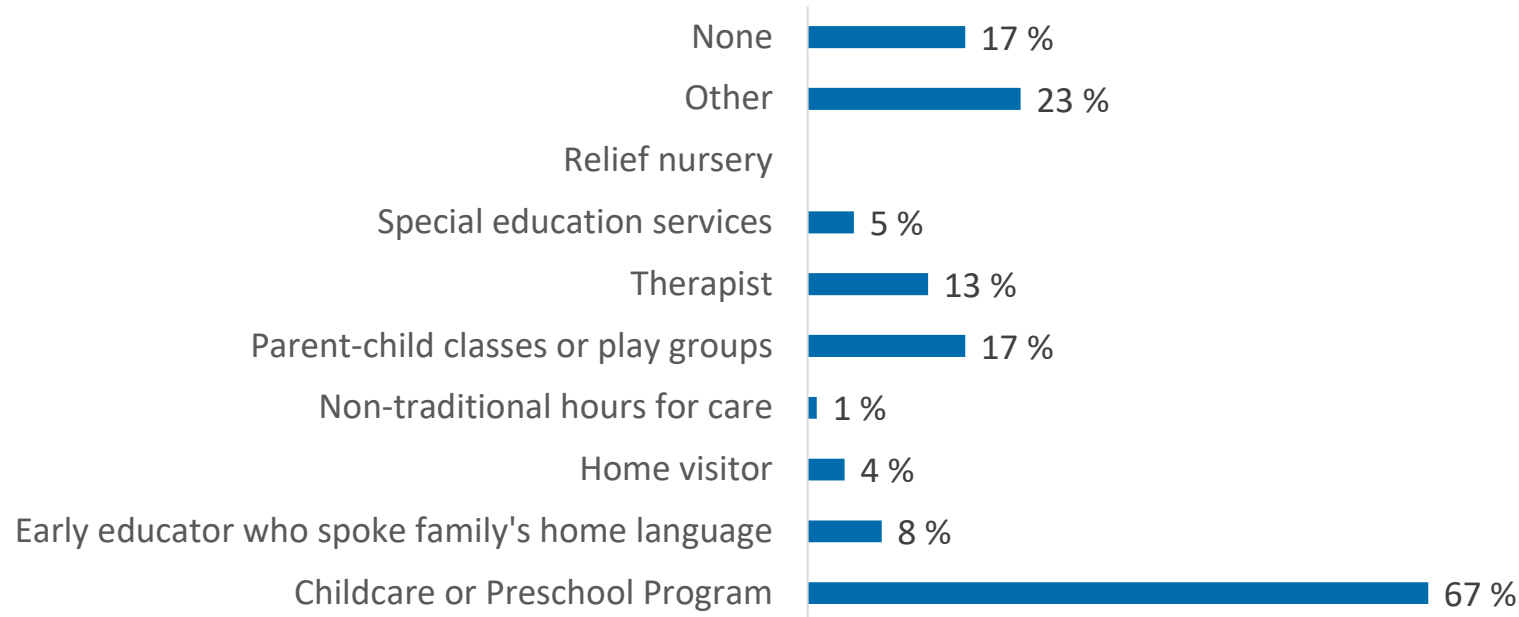


- Families value the opportunity to share about their child
- Educators value the opportunity to meet with families
- Transformational shift

Connecting with and learning about children & families



Families' experiences prior to kindergarten



Most helpful experiences

"He was able to make more friends and gain more independence at preschool."

"Speech was the most helpful. He learned about tools that help him express himself."

Future Aspirations

"To be a kind friend and learn how to work through differences"

"Gain strong foundation of all subjects"

"We want her to blossom and thrive in this community"

"... feel loved at school"

What are families saying?

“Me sorprendió porque con ninguno de mis otros hijos me llamaron para hacerme estas preguntas de parte de un maestro, y este hijo que está en kindergarten es el tercer niño, y aunque ya la conozco a la maestra, nunca había estado tan cerca del niño.” (English: “Also surprised. Hadn’t called me for my other two kids. I know the teacher, but I’ve never been in relationship like this with them.”)

“I was nervous, but also excited to meet her and tell her about my child.”

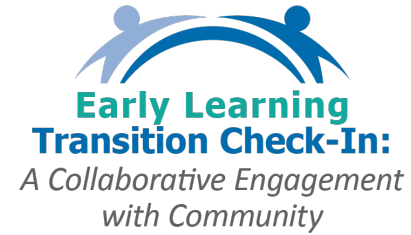
“I think the holistic picture is so important to support a child’s ability to learn.”



What are educators saying?



"I am so excited about this shift. We have done family conversations for years, and the impact it has and tone it sets from the start is incredible. I love listening to families tell us about their hopes and dreams and fears and welcome them to our school family! Can you imagine the cultural shift we could make statewide when all families entering school have an opportunity to meet with their school/teachers one-on-one from the start. So exciting!"



Where Are We Headed?

Preparing for a Successful Statewide Implementation

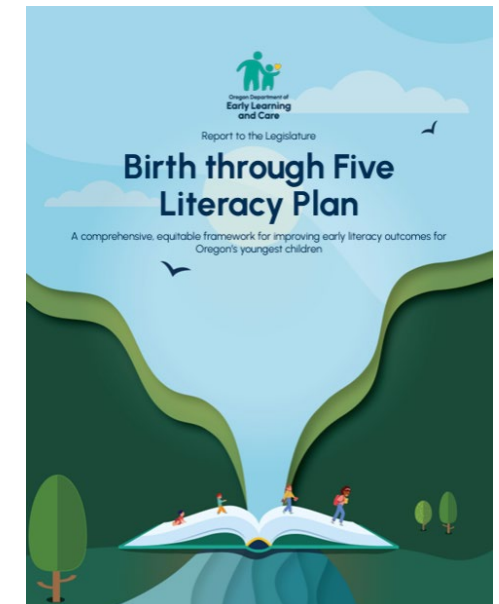
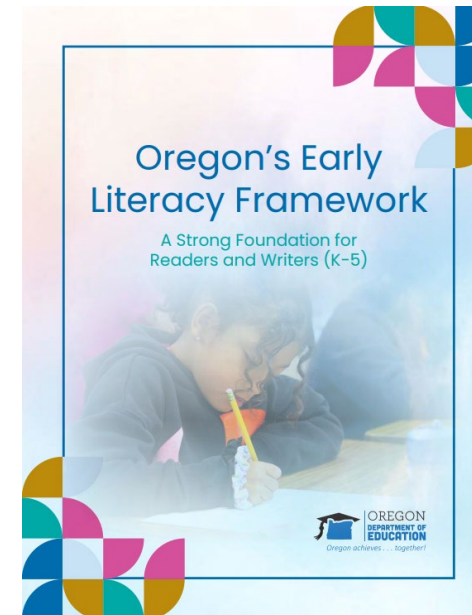
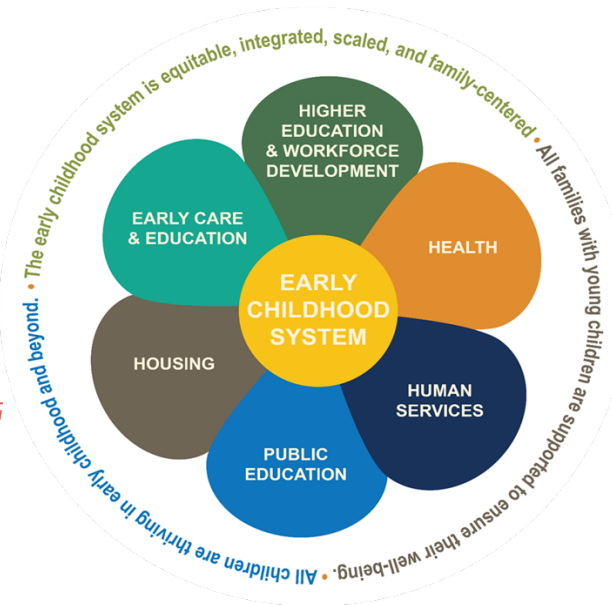


Current preparation in progress:

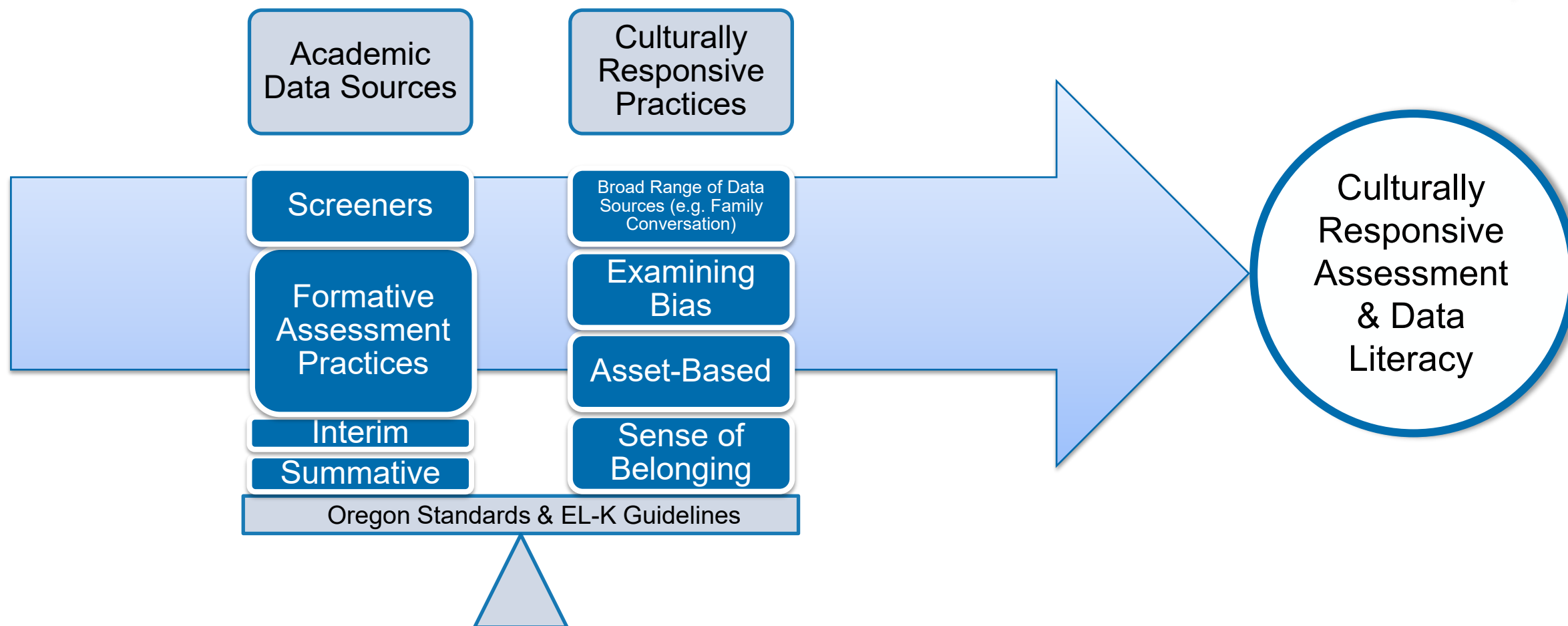
- Identifying links to current initiatives
- Supporting districts with different phases of implementation

Links to Oregon Initiatives

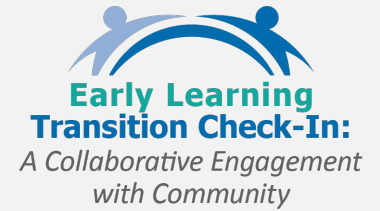
STUDENT SUCCESS ACT



Balanced Assessment System



Preparing for a Successful Statewide Implementation



Current Supports for Implementing the Family Conversation

- Phase 1: Community Responsive Planning: planning plays a key role in this process and intentional steps to make the Family Conversation more community responsive
- Phase 2: Educator Training to prepare for facilitating the Family Conversation
- Phase 3: Data Collection/Reporting - using the data collection tool

Thank you

For more information, contact PreKCheckIn@ode.oregon.org

District Informational materials can be found at [ODE's Community Informed Information Gathering Process at Kindergarten Website](#)

