



City of Gladstone
18505 Portland Avenue
Gladstone, OR 97267

May 5, 2025

Subject: Support for Capital Construction Funding – Meadowlark (Gladstone) Early Learning Project

Capital Construction Committee:

We are writing to express our enthusiastic support for the funding request to complete the Meadowlark Early Learning Center in Gladstone, Oregon. This critical capital project, spearheaded by Clackamas County Children's Commission, will provide life-changing early education services to the Gladstone community and address long-standing gaps in childcare and school readiness opportunities.

The Meadowlark (Gladstone) Early Learning Center will house **six classrooms, four for infants and toddlers, and two for preschool-aged children**—and serve approximately **72 children** in total. With **\$4.16 million in federal funding** already secured through the Office of Head Start, this project is well on its way to becoming a cornerstone of early childhood development in our region. However, an additional **\$1.5 million** is still needed to complete the facility renovations and fully deliver these essential services.

This project is more than a building, it is a response to urgent community needs:

- It will provide **full-day, year-round early learning to 72 children** through Head Start and Early Head Start.
- It will offer the **first and only Early Head Start services in Gladstone**, where there are currently no infant-toddler options available.
- It will replace part-day programming at the Gladstone Center for Children and Families (GCCF), expanding access to meet the needs of **working parents** with full day care at both sites.
- Gladstone is officially designated as a **Child Care Desert**, and the lack of quality, affordable early learning options poses a real barrier to family stability and economic growth.

The Meadowlark Early Learning Center will not only prepare children for academic success, will **empower families, strengthen the local workforce**, and help to **close opportunity gaps** in an underserved community. The benefits of this project will be felt for generations.



On behalf of those who care deeply about the well-being of children and families in Clackamas County, I urge your continued **advocacy and leadership** in securing the **remaining \$1.5 million** needed to make this vision a reality.

Thank you for your commitment to early childhood education and your support of the Meadowlark (Gladstone) Early Learning Center.

Michael Milch

Michael Milch, Mayor

Vanessa Huckaby

Vanessa Huckaby, Council President

Maria Mitchell

Maria Mitchell, City Councilor

Gabrielle Blaug

Gabrielle Blaug, City Councilor

Andrew Labonte

Andrew Labonte, City Councilor

ME Garlington

Mindy Garlington, City Councilor