

Early Learning Hub

Of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties

<i>Who we are</i>	The Early Learning Hub serves Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties and the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians.
<i>Our outcomes</i>	① Kindergarten Readiness ② Stable and Attached Families ③ Coordinated and Aligned Services
<i>Why Hubs</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early Learning Hubs have been designed to translate research about the importance of early learning and development into action in their communities. The Hubs identify the underserved children, assess the needs, and work with cross-sector partners to leverage resources and meet the needs of young children and families.• Early Learning Hubs are designed to make early learning resources and supports more available, more accessible and more effective for children and families that have historically been overrepresented in the opportunity gap and underrepresented in achievement.
<i>Our population</i>	In Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties there are 19,270 children ages 0 - 6 . Approximately 12884 live in families that are considered at-risk based on poverty, drug abuse, unsafe housing, unmet medical needs, parental mental illness, child abuse and/or neglect. Our hub anticipates reaching 90% of these children and families through our targeted efforts.
<i>Our approach</i>	Collective Impact guides our work with a focus on our 3 outcomes. Our Early Learning Hub has brought together leaders in healthcare, education, social services, early childhood and business to develop strategies for preparing children for Kindergarten. Cross-sector Work Groups and Committees guide the work to address the unacceptable achievement gaps among our youngest children.
<i>Early Success</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creation of a three county region which mirrors the service areas of IHN-CCO, LBL ESD, and DHS and maximizes for opportunities for the integration of early learning services.• Broad three county and sector involvement of over 200 community partners in the RFA process and development of the successful application.• Commitment across sectors and regions from decision-makers in serving on the 23 member Governing Board. Members include DHS District Manager, Marco Benavides; Samaritan Health Services, Julie Manning; LBL ESD Superintendent, Mary McKay; Lincoln County Commissioner, Bill Hall; Executive Director of Benton & Lincoln County United Way, Jennifer Moore; Executive Director of Kidco Head Start, Stephany Koehne; and the Head Start Director of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, DeAnn Brown.

- Yearly financial support defined in an MOU with IHN-CCO for EL Hub activities. In year one, some of these funds will be used to develop the Linn Benton Lincoln Early Learning Hub brand and communication strategies.
- The successful submission of a Northwest Health Foundation grant by the EL Hub Funding and Resources workgroup. This one year planning grant will support the meaningful engagement of parents and families in the transformation of our regional early childhood and family support system. Outreach will target families and communities most impacted by educational, health and social inequities, including low-income, rural, immigrant and refugee, Latino/Hispanic, and families with children with disabilities. Our EL Hub was one of 25 selected community-based proposals. Over the next year we will use our grant funds in support of activities that will help us prepare to apply for a five-year Community-Based Partnership with the Northwest Health Foundation.

Continued need

It will take increased investments for Early Learning Hubs to coordinate services across all sectors to better meet the needs of children and families in the communities. Early Learning Hubs are changing the way resources are distributed allowing for collaboration of programs versus competition. It is through this process that Early Learning Hubs will be able to recognize the range of needs in our region, identify gaps in services, leverage resources, and work with partners to develop a range of innovative strategies to fill the gaps through intentional resource allocation.

Why invest in Early Learning?

The future prosperity of Oregon is reliant upon the future prosperity of the people of Oregon. Our children are our future and our investment in them has to start from birth.

The Oregon Equity Lens states, “**We believe** that ending disparities and gaps in achievement begin in the delivery of quality Early Learner programs and appropriate parent engagement and support. This is not simply an expansion of services -- it is a recognition that we need to provide services in a way that best meets the needs of our most vulnerable population, 0 to 6 year olds and their families.”

Does this investment compete with the K-12 budget?

Schools are at the very core of our work and the foundation of our strategic framework for getting children ready for school and supporting stable families. The benefits of these systems changes require long-term return on investment including the support of our K-12 public school system. Without strong schools and supports for families, our children will not continue to grow into the adults we need them to be for the future.

For more information, contact Kristi May, Coordinator (541) 917-4908.

Visit us at: lbearlylearninghub.weebly.com



Our Region

Linn County

- ✓ There are 7 school districts serving Linn County.
- ✓ There are 34 public elementary schools in Linn County, Oregon, serving 13,209 students.
- ✓ Minority enrollment is 21% of the student body (majority Hispanic), which is less than the Oregon state average of 35%.
- ✓ The student:teacher ratio of 23:1 is more than the state average of 20:1.

Benton County

- ✓ There are 5 school districts serving Benton County (including GAPS which also serves Linn County).
- ✓ There are 15 public elementary schools in Benton County, Oregon, serving 4,081 students.
- ✓ Minority enrollment is 27% of the student body (majority Hispanic), which is less than the Oregon state average of 35%.
- ✓ The student:teacher ratio of 19:1 is less than the state average of 20:1.

Lincoln County

- ✓ There is one school district that serves Lincoln County.
- ✓ There are 7 public elementary schools in Lincoln County, Oregon, serving 2,617 students.
- ✓ Minority enrollment is 32% of the student body (majority Hispanic), which is less than the Oregon state average of 35%.
- ✓ The student:teacher ratio of 23:1 is more than the state average of 20:1.



FUNDING

Mixed-Delivery Preschool

- Multiple research studies have demonstrated the impact of high quality preschool on children's later learning and success. Oregon Pre-Kindergarten/ Head Start serves about 14,000 children, about 50% of the state's eligible 3 and 4 year olds. Many more low income families do not qualify for Head Start because their income is slightly over the eligibility threshold. In order to make preschool significantly more accessible we have to build upon existing community capacity and expand access to more low income families. The design of a mixed-delivery model would allow the state to efficiently support preschool for eligible children through myriad channels including schools, community-based organizations and private providers, in addition to Head Start.
- With the implementation of full-day kindergarten, many children will go from no formal learning environment to a full-day of formal learning overnight. Making preschool accessible to families who otherwise couldn't afford it will help ensure those children are set up to succeed and take advantage of the opportunities kindergarten has to offer.

Kindergarten Partnership and Innovation Fund

- If you walk into most kindergarten classrooms and ask where those five year olds were or what they were expected to know and be able to do before they walked through the school doors, the teacher would not be able to tell you. The disconnect between early learning and elementary schools is pervasive and a significant hurdle for children and families.
- The Kindergarten Partnership and Innovation Fund will be used to fund innovative cross-sector partnerships that are working to bridge that divide and help prepare children to take advantage of the full kindergarten experience and not be hindered by silos and unknown expectations. We will target local underserved communities and work with early learning providers, K-12 educators and families to design strategies that meet the needs of children and families as they make the transition into kindergarten.



THE VISION

- Imagine a Kindergarten class with 25 or more students. Samantha has never been in a room with so many other kids before, she has trouble following directions and staying focused on a task. When she gets upset she screams and runs around the classroom. There are 24 other children in the room with a range of skills. In most schools the Kindergarten teacher does not know what five year old Samantha's experience was before she showed up at Kindergarten. The teacher doesn't know if she has been in any formal or informal child care or pre-school, doesn't know if she has had a developmental screening, doesn't know what Samantha's home situation is like or what triggers her melt-downs. The kindergarten classroom is seen as the point of entry into education and the Kindergarten teacher is expected to assess and meet the needs of 25 or more students. There is no expectation that the teacher will know much about how the child spent their first five years. When Samantha reaches 3rd grade, the third grade teacher will know a lot more about her past experience, especially if she stayed at the same school. The teacher will know generally what was expected of Samantha the previous three years. The teacher will have some information about Samantha's successes and struggles. If Samantha has any developmental delays, the teacher will know before Samantha walks into the classroom.
- Our goal is to create an early learning system that meets the needs of children and families, so we can begin to connect what happens in the first five years of a child's life to what happens after. If Samantha is born into a low-income family, as around 45% of children in Oregon are, we want to give Samantha's family access to a family resource manager/navigator because parenting is a difficult journey for everyone. We want Samantha's family to have affordable and accessible child care opportunities focused on her social/emotional and cognitive development. We want Samantha to have a developmental screening to make sure her development is on-track and to get her appropriate supports if she and her family need them. And when she turns 3, we want Samantha to have access to preschool. We want Samantha's elementary school to be connected to Samantha's preschool so that both parties know what to expect when Samantha transitions. With this intentional focus on Samantha's learning and development, Samantha can develop the foundation she needs to be able to take advantage of every opportunity kindergarten has to offer her.