



Early Learning Hub

of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties

Director Report September, 2020



Delilah snuggled in for the night at a friend's house after evacuating from our home.



It's hard to believe it's already September. We have the start of the fall term ahead of us but many in our communities are still reeling from the devastation of Oregon's massive wildfires.

My heart goes out to the families who have been affected by the wildfires. The fires reached into every corner of our Hub region and the impact will be felt for many years. Here at the Hub, we are working with our partner agencies to support the work of connecting families in our communities to resources for fire recovery.

In addition, we continue to work on increasing the availability of quality child care and early childhood education. Our weekly meetings are a concrete support for child care providers and community partners, even as our landscape changes.

Thank you for all of your continued good work,
Kristi Collins, EL Hub Director

Preschool Promise And Coordinated Enrollment

A bright light for our region in the midst of tough times is the wonderful news that all Tier Two Preschool Promise applicants will also receive grant funding for preschool slots. This brings the total Preschool Promise slots to **222** for the Linn/Benton/Lincoln region! We are very excited to help families in our communities access quality early childhood education for their children.

While the potential providers are in the process of executing their contracts with the Early Learning Division (ELD), the Hub staff has been working on the Coordinated Enrollment (CE) process. In addition to participating in ELD-required training, our CE staff have been working with LBCC's IT department to develop a contact-less process for Preschool Promise applications and document submissions.

The online application will keep staff and families safe from COVID-19 and be a fast way to get applications processed. There will also be paper applications and direct help from staff for people who prefer that method.

Pollywog Updates

Pollywog has been busy connecting families with resources and community partners.

- Pollywog's Parent Voice blogs, shared weekly in English and Spanish, have been popular on Facebook.
- Recent topics for the Pollywog Parent Newsletter included how parents can advocate for their children in August and in September was understanding child care. The newsletter is published monthly in English and Spanish.
- 2020-2021 funding awards include \$50,000 from Samaritan Health, \$100,000 from IHN-CCO, and approximately \$100,000 from Oregon Community Foundation.
- Pollywog was added to Samaritan's health record system, Epic, so now providers can refer families directly.
- Pollywog staff are hard at work on creating accessible content on YouTube, including Powtoons in Spanish and with voice-overs.

Regional Data Book 2021

The Data and Evaluation Work Group, along with Hub staff, continues to work on the next edition of the Regional Data Book, due in early 2021. The time-intensive process includes gathering data, writing analyses of data, checking calculations for errors, and editing several times. Finally, everything is laid out and designed into a digital copy.

One interesting aspect of this edition of the Data Book is that the data was mostly collected before COVID-19 dramatically affected our world. Although this data will be out-of-date by publication, and there have been drastic changes in services in our region, there is great value in the pre-COVID-19 snapshot presented in this edition. We hope this data can be a guidepost as we work toward a regional economic and social recovery.

The [2019 Regional Data Book](#) and the [Executive Summary](#) are available on the EL Hub website.



Hub Work Group Updates

Data & Evaluation Work Group

The Data & Evaluation Work Group has postponed regular meetings while the members work on production of the next edition of the regional Data Book. The next meeting is planned for October, although the usual day/time might change.

Contact: Lynn Hall
halll@linnbenton.edu

Parent Engagement Committee

The Parent Engagement Committee met on August 25, 2020. We discussed ways to support parents and increase parent engagement virtually. Our next meeting is scheduled for September 22, 2020.

Contact: Shirley Blake
blakes@linnbenton.edu

Health Care Integration Work Group

The Health Care Integration Work Group met on September 8, 2020. We discussed progress on the Family Connects program, OHA COVID-19 updates, and an increase in child abuse reports seen by DHS. Our next meeting is scheduled for October 13, 2020.

Contact: LeAnne Trask
traskl@linnbenton.edu

P-3 Alignment Work Group and Early Childhood Coordinating Council

A subset of these work groups has been meeting weekly as the Child Care Partners Updates group in collaboration with Family Connections, our local Child Care Resource & Referral.

Early Learning Hub Mission and Vision Statements

Mission: The Early Learning Hub of Linn, Benton and Lincoln Counties brings partners together to increase family stability, improve kindergarten readiness, and ensure service coordination that is equitable and culturally and linguistically competent.

Vision: Our communities provide an easily accessible and collaborative system of support and care for families that help children to grow up safe, nurtured, healthy, and ready for school and life.