



Early Learning Hub

of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties

Charter

Adopted on: 10/24/14

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Mission: The Early Learning Hub of Linn, Benton & 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

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Early Learning Hub of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties

Article I – Name and Lead Agency

Section 1: Name

The name of this organization shall be Early Learning Hub of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties, which will serve as the Regional Early Learning Hub, hereafter referred to as Hub or EL Hub, for Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties as awarded under the Department of Early Learning and Care (DELIC) and as mandated in HB2013.

Section 2: Lead Agency

Linn Benton Community College, “LBCC,” a community college serving Linn and Benton Counties, shall be the Lead Agency for the Hub.

Article II – Common Agenda, Purpose, and Guiding Principles

Section 1: Common Agenda

The purpose of Early Learning Hubs is to support an aligned, coordinated, and family-centered early childhood system in which families receive the support they need to be healthy, stable, and attached, and their children receive the early learning experiences they need to thrive.

Effective early childhood systems integrate a diverse array of accessible, high-quality services and supports across multiple sectors and domains (e.g., early learning and development, health and mental health, family leadership and support) to ensure policies and practices are aligned with goals for equitable early childhood development.

Section 2: Statement of Purpose (Legislative Intent)

Pursuant to Early Learning Legislation, the Hub shall have as its purpose the development and support of a coordinated system of early learning services designed to maximize resources and to ensure that children in the service area, birth through six years of age, receive the support they need to enter kindergarten safe, healthy, and ready to be successful in school. The Hub will perform its work in compliance with state statute and federal rules and regulations pertaining to Early Learning Hubs [including Senate Bill 909 (2011); House Bill 4165 (2012); House Bill 2013 (2013); Oregon Revised Statute, Chapter 329; ORS 417.827, Oregon Administrative Rules 414-002-0995 through 414-002-0010; and 414-900-0005 through 414-900-0510.]

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Section 3: Guiding Principles

The Hub and its governance councils shall operate under the following guiding principles in fulfilling the vision, mission, and outcome goals of an Early Learning Hub:

- There are several places where families and organizations cross the three counties, providing opportunities for systems alignment and coordination.
- We will strive to create community-specific strategies, since needs and programs differ across counties and communities.
- We respect and value our existing relationships and will seek to expand our partnerships and build new relationships.
- Raise Up Oregon will guide our work with a focus on collaborative action that leads to systems changes.
- Our governance model will evolve over time, and will be evaluated and adjusted to strategically meet outcomes.

Article III – Service Area, Target Population, and Approach

Section 1: Service Area

The Hub will serve Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties, and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.

Section 2: Target Population

The Hub's primary focus is on children six years of age and younger and their families, who are defined by Oregon Revised Statutes as at-risk for arriving at kindergarten unprepared if they have one or more of the following risk factors: Living in a household that is at or near poverty, as determined under federal poverty guidelines;

- Living in inadequate or unsafe housing;
- having inadequate nutrition;
- Living in a household where there is significant or documented domestic conflict, disruption, or violence;
- Having a parent with mental illness, who engages in substance abuse, or who experiences a developmental disability or an intellectual disability;
- Living in a circumstance under which there is neglectful or abusive caregiving;
- Having unmet health care and medical treatment needs; or
- Having a racial or ethnic minority status that is historically consistent with disproportionate overrepresentation in academic achievement gaps or in the systems of child welfare, foster care, or juvenile or adult corrections.

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Section 3: Approach

In partnership with the Hub Governance Council and the Family Advisory Council, lead regional alignment and coordination of early learning systems as follows:

- Create a shared vision for the regional Early Learning System;
- Engage cross-sector and community partners;
- Engage in system-focused problem solving and action;
- Engage in continuous learning and improvement of regional Early Childhood System plans; and
- Facilitate strategic convening of sector and community partners

Article IV - Governance Structure

The governance structure of the Hub will include the following four components:

- 1) Lead Agency
- 2) Governance Council and its Standing Committees
- 3) Family Advisory Council
- 4) Regional Stewardship Committee
- 5) Advisory/Work Groups

Changes to this structure require submitting written notice to the Grant Manager at DELC requesting approval of proposed changes, 30 days prior to any changes taking effect.

Article V – Lead Agency

Linn-Benton Community College (LBCC), as the Lead Agency and fiscal agent, will sign the contracts and accept responsibility for advancing the Hub outcomes. LBCC will enter into contracts on behalf of the Early Learning Hub of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties, and a staff Director will provide program coordination and reporting. Project oversight will be delegated to the Governance Council. LBCC will review all recommendations to ensure they are in line with the obligations of the College as the backbone of the EL Hub and the contract with the Department of Early Learning and Care

Article VI – Governance Council

Section 1: Membership

The Governance Council will be made up of twenty-eight members: twenty-one sector members, consisting of 7 individuals from each county representing each

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of the seven sectors (K-12, Health, Human and Social Services, Parents, Business, Housing and Early Childhood), six members from organizations with standing positions, one from each of the following six organizations: LBCC, IHN-CCO, DHS, LBL-ESD, CCR&R and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, plus the Hub Director.

Section 1a: Hub Director

The Backbone Organization/Lead Agency, in collaboration with and with the consent of the Governance Council, will employ a Hub Director. Any changes to the Hub Director role by the Backbone Organization/Lead Agency must include collaboration and consent from the Governance Council.

The Hub Director focuses on centering equity and addressing the needs of the region's identified priority population(s). The Hub Director is the conduit, connector, and systems-capacity builder for the Early Learning Hub. The Hub Director(s) leads strategies, communication and alignment in coordination with the Governance Council. In partnership with the Governance Council, the Hub Director administers the functions of the Hub as outlined in Oregon Administrative Rules and the Grant Agreement with the State of Oregon.

Section 2: Nominations and Appointments

The initial Council was selected through a nomination process and selected by a committee representing all three counties and multiple sectors. Subsequent Council members for the sector positions (other than the K-12 sector) will be recruited by EL Hub partners based on the identified sector and county. Selection will be made by the Governance Council, with consideration of the Council's needs (e.g., expertise, equity lens). The K-12 sector, upon its request, will appoint its own members for the three counties, since this is the only sector having a leadership body that includes all three counties. The six organizations with standing positions will appoint their own representatives to the Council; those appointed should have key decision-making responsibilities within their organizations.

Section 3: Alternates

Organization members may use alternates. As continuity is important, the use of alternates is, however, discouraged. Alternates can be used no more than once each quarter. They should ideally be identified in advance, fully briefed, and able to represent the organization during decision-making. Use of an alternate will be noted on the meeting minutes.

Section 4: Length of Service

Initial members representing the seven sectors will serve staggered terms as

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follows: 1/3 will rotate off in two years, 1/3 in three years, and 1/3 in four years. All future members representing the seven sectors will serve a term of three (3) years.

The terms of the organizational standing position of members will be determined by each organization.

Section 5: Roles and Responsibilities of the Governance Council

- Ensure the vision and mission of the Hub through the development and approval of a regional strategic plan
- Provide fiscal oversight by approving budgets and monitoring expenses
- Provide work groups oversight
- Foster cross-sector alignment and integration
- Oversee the implementation of the strategic plan; monitoring and ensuring outcomes
- Manage resource allocations and funding priorities

Section 6: Meetings, Quorum

The Governance Council is a public body subject to public meetings and records laws as set forth in ORS Chapter 192. All meetings will be open to the public. Information regarding the meeting schedule and access will be posted to www.lblearlylearninghub.org. The beginning of each agenda will include a standing item for public comment.

On an annual basis, the Council will establish a schedule of regular monthly meetings. Special meetings will be called as needed. Attendance at meetings may be in person, by call-in, or virtually. When members participate remotely, their presence will count toward a quorum. The quorum necessary to make final decisions will be 51% of the current Governance Council Members.

Section 7: Notice

All members shall be given written (including e-mail) notice of the time, date, location, and purpose of the meeting at least 3 days before a regular Governance Council Meeting, and written (including e-mail) or verbal notice one day before a special meeting. Public notice shall also be given of regular Governance Council Meetings. Time will be allocated on the agenda for public comment.

Section 8: Stipends

Parent representatives will be provided a stipend to reduce the costs of attendance.

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Section 9: Officers

The Governance Council will have two co-chairs, who will facilitate the Council meetings and serve on the Leadership Committee.

Section 10: Removal of Council Members

A Member may be recommended for removal by the Leadership Committee and removed from the Council by a super-majority vote (75%) of the membership then in office. A member may be removed for the following reasons: being convicted of a felony; for conduct detrimental to the ability of the Council to effectively conduct business; or for missing three (3) consecutive meetings, for three (3) unexcused absences during one fiscal year (July 1 to June 30), or use of an alternate more than once per quarter. The chair shall report such instances of absenteeism to the Member by written notification. The Leadership Committee shall make its recommendation for removal to the Council only after notifying the Member and after making informal attempts to remedy any situation involving detrimental conduct.

Section 11: Standing Committees of the Governance Council

Leadership Committee

The Leadership Committee will be made up of: 3-5 Council Members, including the co-chairs; the Hub Director; and a representative of each active advisory/work group. They will meet between the general Council meetings. Their duties include: debriefing the past Council meeting and planning the agenda for the upcoming meeting; making recommendations to the full Council as needed; and other duties that may arise. The co-chairs of the Governance Council will function as facilitators of the Leadership Committee.

Fiscal Oversight Committee

The Fiscal Oversight Committee will be made up of 2-4 Council Members. Their duties include: coordinating with the EL Hub Director and the EL Hub Program Accounting Specialist; ensuring that accurate financial information is available to the Governance Council; tracking funding streams and reviewing the financial situation of the Hub; and supporting the Hub budgeting and financial management. The Fiscal Oversight Committee will meet quarterly and when significant budget changes are anticipated. The Fiscal Oversight Committee makes recommendations to the full Council; it has no decision-making authority.

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Compliance and Regulatory Committee

The Compliance & Regulatory Committee will be made up of 2-4 Council Members, including a representative from the Backbone organization. Their duties include: ensuring compliance with state requirements, including the Early Learning Hub rule set and the Hub's DELC contract; maintaining alignment between the Hub's charter and state rules/contract language, and leading charter revisions when needed; monitoring deliverables and deadlines, ensuring required reports and submissions to DELC are completed on time and brought to the Council as appropriate; staying informed about updates to rules and contract expectations, and serving as an accountability layer alongside Hub leadership; supporting governance continuity, so that Council members retain enough working knowledge of rules and obligations to participate effectively during leadership transitions, if necessary. The Compliance & Regulatory committee will not assume responsibilities that belong to the backbone organization, such as personnel or day-to-day program management. The Compliance & Regulatory Committee will meet at least biannually and when significant changes to the contracts are anticipated. The Compliance & Regulatory Committee makes recommendations to the full Council. It has no decision-making authority.

Article VII – Family Advisory Council

Purpose

The Family Advisory Council of the Early Learning Hub of Linn, Benton & Lincoln counties will provide parent voice to the proposal, development, and implementation of ideas that impact environments in our region so young children can grow being well-adjusted, healthy, and ready for school.

Mission

The Family Advisory Council's mission is to include parent voice in designing and implementing programs focused on creating systemic change that promotes the healthy growth and development of all children, zero to five.

Membership

The FAC of Linn, Benton & Lincoln counties is composed of 6 to 10 parents from each county whose children belong to priority populations identified by the local EL Hub.

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Duties

- Participate in a minimum of four regular meetings per year.
- Actively engage in leadership training, professional development, and obtain advocacy skills
- Represent parent/caregiver and family voice in each of the identified priority populations.
- Suggest ideas and agenda items.
- Nominate and elect FAC officers.
- Represent parent/caregiver and family voice in decision making with an FAC elected member serving in a leadership role on the governance council.

Article VIII – Regional Stewardship Committee

Purpose

The Stewardship Committee for ECE Sector Expansion will oversee the regional Early Childhood Service Analysis and develop the ECE system plan for the region.

Responsibilities

With authority delegated by the Hub Governance Council, the Regional Stewardship Committee will:

- Represent the perspectives of key constituencies and communities in the regional Early Childhood Service Analysis.
- Develop a base of common knowledge and understanding about the ECE system
- Contribute to the planning for and successful facilitation of family and provider engagement activities
- Review and make meaning of quantitative and qualitative data
- Inform the preparation of deliverables to DELC
- Prioritize issues to target in the regional ECE system plan
- Make recommendations to the Hub Governance Council about the structure needed to oversee the implementation of the regional ECE system plan.

Article IX – Advisory/Work Groups

Work groups identified as fundamental to implementing the concepts and processes in the EL Hub include Funding and Resources, Data and Evaluation, Health Care Integration, P-3 Alignment, and Early Childhood Coordinating

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Council. Additional groups may be established by the Governance Council as needed to accomplish the EL Hubs strategic goals and outcomes. Work groups will be open to interested participants. Work groups will be led by co-chairs, determined by each respective group.

Funding and Resources

Responsible for mapping funding opportunities in the region, creating the annual Comprehensive Children's budget, and identifying and reviewing potential grant opportunities. This work group meets on an "as needed" basis.

Data and Evaluation

Ensure that the EL Hub has the data it needs to make decisions informed by an understanding of the target population and progress towards outcomes.

Health Care Integration

Inform and facilitate the alignment of EL Hub outcomes with health care sector initiatives. Responsible for improving the referral pathway for families; identifying unserved children, and identifying strategies or collaborations for providing appropriate services. Works to align home visiting programs beginning with prenatal services.

P-3 Alignment

Responsible for building connections between families, early learning, and K-12.

Early Childhood Coordinating Council

A forum for the broad-based discussion of early childhood programming: including QRIS, ASQ, parenting education, ECE workforce, ECE coaching & training, and inclusive practices.

Article X – Decision Making

The Governance Council will strive for consensus in all of its decision-making. Working toward consensus is a fundamental principle and includes the following understandings:

Definition of "Consensus": Consensus means that all group members either fully support or can live with a proposal or decision and believe that their constituents can as well. In reaching consensus, some Council members may strongly endorse a particular proposal while others may accept it as "workable." Others may be only able to "live with it." Still others may choose to "stand aside" by verbally noting a disagreement, yet allowing the group to reach a consensus without them. Any of these actions still constitutes consensus.

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Those who choose to "stand aside" may request to have their views represented in meeting summaries and any final report or decision document.

Representatives: When an initial agreement is achieved, some participants may need to take the agreement back to their constituencies or a higher decision-making authority for ratification. If those higher authorities or constituents express concerns or reservations, they also have an obligation to propose an alternative that will address all interests. These responses will be brought back to the group for further deliberations.

When Consensus Cannot be Reached: Reaching consensus is the intended outcome of each discussion. If the group is not able to reach consensus after full deliberation and attempts to break the impasse have not been effective, a vote on the proposal will be taken by a show of hands. The proposal or decision passes if a supermajority (75%) of the members present vote in favor of it. Those in the minority are invited to write a "minority statement" describing their concerns and views, and this statement will become part of the official meeting summary.

Agenda, Absent Meetings, Meeting Summary

- Items requiring a formal decision will be noted on the agenda. Absent group members are invited to provide their input for group consideration in advance of the meeting they will miss.
- Highlights of the discussion leading to a decision, the decision, and any minority opinions will be included in the meeting summary.

Article XI – Standard of Conduct

Section 1: Confidentiality

All individual client information obtained by the EL Hub Staff, Council members, members of working/advisory group, subcontractors, or partners will be treated as confidential, and shall not be divulged without the written consent of the client, the responsible parent of a minor child, or his or her guardian, except as required under mandatory reporting guidelines.

Disclosure of information in summaries, statistical or other form, which does not identify specific individuals, is allowed. The use or disclosure of information concerning clients shall be limited to persons directly connected with the administration of the agreement between the EL Hub and the Department of Early Learning & Care (DELC). DELC and EL subcontractors will share information as necessary to effectively serve ODE clients. Council members will be required to sign the EL Hub Confidentiality form annually.

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Section 2: Conflict of Interest

All members of the EL Hub Governance Council must disclose when they believe they have or may have a conflict of interest and may participate in discussions that are leading to consensus.

If, however, consensus cannot be reached and the group uses the fall-back voting process, the individual with the conflict of interest may not participate in that final vote.

Definition: A conflict of interest occurs when one's responsibilities to the EL Hub Governance Council could be influenced or compromised by self-interest, a prior commitment, competing loyalties (for example, caused by another role one is serving in), or an inability to be objective.

- Example: Financial conflict—a member, or a member of their family, would serve to benefit financially from a decision made by the Council.
- Example: Role conflict—a member's role in an organization other than the EL Hub carries with it certain responsibilities that compromise their ability to act objectively on an issue being considered by the Council.

Failure to Disclose: If the Council or Leadership Committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain the alleged failure to disclose.

If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the Council or Leadership Committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

Conflict of Interest Form: Council members annually agree to and sign the EL Hub Conflict of Interest form.

Section 3: Personal Conduct

Staff and Governance Council members shall conduct themselves in a manner calculated to avoid damaging the reputation and good name of the EL Hub.

Article XII – Conflict mediation and resolution with the Backbone agency

The lead agency acts as the backbone agency of the Hub. It will work closely with the Governance Council on issues concerning the Early Learning Hub.

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If the parties find themselves in a conflict around issues, they will utilize the following process for mediation and resolution:

- A. First, try to resolve the issue(s) with direct and open communication and problem-solving between the Governance Council and the backbone entity.
- B. If direct communication does not resolve the conflict, the parties will use a neutral mediator to work with the Governance Council and backbone entity. The mediator must be mutually agreed upon by both parties, with any costs being shared equally by both parties.
- C. If mediation does not resolve the conflict(s)
 - a. The Governance Council may take a vote of no confidence in the backbone entity. If the vote of no confidence passes with a majority of voting members, the Governance Council will contact the Early Learning Hub Contract Administrator(s) for assistance and support in addressing the lack of confidence and/or
 - b. The backbone entity may state they have no confidence in the Governance Council. The backbone entity will contact the Early Learning Hub Contract Administrator(s) for assistance and support in addressing the lack of confidence

Article XIII – Procedures for dissolution or transition of the Council

If there is a request for the dissolution or transition of the Governance Council or the backbone/lead agency, the following procedure will be used:

Governance Council members and the backbone entity will be provided with comprehensive information to understand the reasons for the dissolution or the transition of the Governance Council or backbone/lead agency.

The parties will use the following process:

1. If the Governance Council votes to dissolve or transition itself, it will contact the Early Learning Hub Contract Administrator(s) for assistance and support. They will assist in addressing the dissolution or transition and establishing a new Governance Council.
2. If the Governance Council is nonfunctioning and unable to take a vote, the Governance Council chair and/or the Hub Director will contact the Early Learning Hub Contract Administrator(s) for assistance and support in addressing the dissolution or transition and establishing a new Governance Council.
3. If the backbone entity chooses to dissolve or transition itself from the relationship/contract, they will contact the Early Learning Hub Contract

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Administrator(s) for assistance and support in addressing the dissolution of the partnership. The Early Learning Hub Contract Administrator(s) will work with the Governance Council to establish a new Lead Agency/backbone organization.

Article XIV – Duration and Modifications of this Charter

Review and revision of this Charter shall take place biannually prior to the Hub contract renewal. If it is determined that revisions are needed, the Director will request written approval from DELC to revise the Charter. Any amendments to the Charter shall be approved by 75% of the Governance Council membership. Written notice of the proposed amendment shall be given in the agenda for the meeting. All adopted Charter changes will be forwarded to the Department of Early Learning and Care.

Article XV – Controlling Authority

As it is recognized that the existence of this EL Hub is controlled by statute, all conflicts between this Charter and the controlling statute or administrative rule now in existence or adopted in the future are to be resolved in accordance with the appropriate statute or administrative rule.



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