



## Multnomah County's Role in the Governor's Early Learning Initiative

### **BACKGROUND**

Under the leadership of Governor Kitzhaber, Oregon has adopted the "40-40-20" goal, which states that by 2025, 40% of adult Oregonians will have earned a bachelor's degree or higher; 40% will have earned an associate's degree or post-secondary credential; and that the remaining 20% will have earned at least a high school diploma or its equivalent. A central pillar of this effort is to the need to ensure children arrive at kindergarten prepared to succeed. In response, the Legislature enacted two key bills – SB 909 and HB 4165 - which, together, endorse a new system of integrated services and authorize creation of Community-Based Coordinators of Early Learning Services, or 'Hubs', to serve as the system's architecture in each region.

In response, the state plans to certify Hubs in waves through January 2014; the release of the Request for Application is planned for Spring, 2013 and early adopters are slated to be certified as early as July 1, 2013.

### **WHAT WE PROPOSE**

At Multnomah County, a cross-departmental group has met to discuss the proposed direction of the Early Learning Council. Staff member have also participated in statewide efforts to define the emerging Early Learning System. Conversations with community partners have focused community leaders' perception about the role of the Hub. Based on this, the Multnomah County work group recommends the following action:

- Move forward in preparing for Multnomah County to serve as the County's designated Hub.
- Create a timeline that effectively positions Multnomah County to be an early adopter Hub.
- Identify key community partners and their roles.

### **WHY IT MAKES SENSE**

Our internal leadership believes Multnomah County serving as the Hub is the right plan at the right time:

- It is consistent with the approach and role Multnomah County has taken aligning other services.
- The groundwork needed to succeed is already in place.
- Critical partners are supportive and many have requested we take on the role.
- Many children and families in poverty already receive services thru Multnomah County funded health clinics, SUN schools, anti –poverty programs and libraries.

- Multnomah County is an experienced convener and manager of collaborative groups and services.
- Moving ahead as an early adopter may allow us to help define the process and expectations for our community.
- Early adopters may be positioned to access implementation funding.

## **HOW WE WILL DO IT**

As the county's Hub, designated Multnomah County staff will create and implement a system of care with shared outcomes, risk, and investment while maintaining the unique strengths of individual partners. This approach:

- Will allow the county to track outcomes with a steadfast willingness to change approaches that do not deliver results. It is anticipated that the state will mandate a shared data system that the county can access and use to measure outcomes.
- Will facilitate referrals and service access between providers connectivity will facilitate referrals and service access between providers.
- Will include a Guidance/Oversight structure to guide the work of the Hub.
- Will ensure the emerging system of care focuses on equity and empowerment for families served.

## **WHO WE WILL SERVE**

Services will focus on children, ages 0-5, at highest risk for not meeting the kindergarten readiness benchmark. Current local data suggests this includes low-income families and communities of color, specifically, Native American, Hispanic, African American children as well as children of Asian immigrants throughout Multnomah County. This focus may be modified as more comprehensive and accurate data is analyzed.

## **PROPOSED MILESTONES**

Once approved, designated County staff would work to achieve the following milestones through the end of the next biennium (June 30, 2015).

*Through June 30, 2013:*

- Continue partnership building
- Respond to the state's request for application
- Ensure access to current services funded through the Commission on Children and Families continues while new system is created
- Form Guidance/Oversight group

*July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014*

- Maintain current services funded through the Commission on Children & Families

- Appoint an Advisory Committee and develop Memorandums of Understanding to unite the entities
- Conduct service mapping
- Conduct data analysis – are we serving children who are most at risk?
- Initiate identification of common data elements currently collected, and map alignment across systems
- Identify initial outcomes current data can capture
- Start alignment of highest-risk children to the most appropriate services
- Begin discussions to identify alignment with the Coordinated Care Organizations

*July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015*

- Identify programs/investments that are working
- Define and begin implementation of system alignment
- Implement new state data system
- Other steps as identified in 1<sup>st</sup> year implementation

### **NEXT STEPS – WHAT IT WILL TAKE**

- Board support of Multnomah County pursuing Hub designation
- Designated staffing to accomplish milestones, including:
  - Maintain current services (budget, contacts, monitoring)
  - Data collection and analysis (common data elements, service mapping)
  - Governance and process (advisory committee, administration, reporting)
  - Outreach and facilitation (ensure family/community input from target populations)

*Note: All recommendations are based on projections provided by the state. As such, the timeline and/or feasibility of this proposal are based on, at a minimum, the following assumptions:*

- *State meets planned timeframes*
- *State writes guidelines that compel state departments to participate and coordinate with designated 'Hubs'*