

Our Vision for Preschool in Multnomah County

hosted by Early Learning Multnomah (ELM)

This document was created between Jan.-July 2016 with input from more than 200 interested community members, including parents from ELM's Parent Accountability Council. This vision informs implementation of the Preschool Promise grant and lays a foundation for future efforts to develop more preschool opportunities in Multnomah County. As our community has more conversation, this vision will be updated, and, as needed, additional detail will be added.

We want preschools that benefit our **PRIORITY POPULATION**. Some families face racism. Some families face discrimination because of their language, gender or disabilities. Some families cannot afford preschool. We want to take down the barriers that let some children into preschools and keep others out. We want all children to have the choice to go to a preschool where they can thrive.

We want preschools that work for **EQUITY**. Our early learning system creates barriers for families who do not speak English, who are from communities of color and who experience disabilities. We want all children to be honored as capable and full of promise. We want families to experience preschools that are free from racism, bias and discrimination.

We want preschools that are **PARENT-CENTERED**. Parents and family members are the ones who know the children best. We want preschools that welcome families into the classroom with a smile. We want respectful partnerships between parents, families and teachers.

We want preschools that create **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**. Children live and learn in families. We want to connect families, teachers and other supportive early learning partners. We want preschools that help make the family strong.

We want preschools that build **SYSTEM COORDINATION**. Teaching preschool is an important job. We want teachers to have the training and support they need to reach our vision. We want more teachers who are from our priority populations. We want a variety of preschool settings and approaches so families can choose the preschool that works for them. Our vision will take all of us working together. We want champions and advocates to speak out for our vision for preschool. We want to talk about preschool with everyone.

We want preschools in Multnomah County that are

- **Affordable** so that all families can give their children a great start toward school success
- **Accessible** so that families can take their children to the preschool setting that works best for them
- **Culturally relevant** so that families are honored and respected and understood
- **Trauma-sensitive** so that children and families have the supports they need
- **Inclusive** so that children of all abilities are welcome to play and grow together
- **High quality** so that skilled teachers support children's growth and development, and
- **Joyful learning environments** where children are encouraged to explore and to experiment with the world around them.

