

Oregon's Early Learning System

Positive early experiences. A lifetime of learning. Results for Oregon.

The Oregon Early Learning Council was created in 2011 by the Legislature to build a coordinated, connected and outcomes focused statewide early learning system. The Council guides efforts to streamline state programs, provides policy direction to meet early learning goals statewide and provides oversight of services supporting children and families across Oregon.

The Council is committed to making measurable progress to ensure that all Oregon children enter kindergarten ready to succeed and are raised in stable families with caregivers to whom they are attached. The Council is also committed to ensuring services and systems are coordinated and aligned to support achieving these goals.

In doing its work, the Early Learning Council is committed to:

- Focusing strategies on children who are over-represented in the academic achievement gap and under-represented in accessing strong services and supports.
- Listening to stakeholders across the state and acting on what we hear and learn from them.
- Focusing on results and using data to drive decisions.
- Having the courage necessary to make change.
- Holding onto a sense of urgency.
- Focusing its message and broadening its communication.

This strategic plan acts as a guide for this important work. It is intended to work as a living document to which additional activities and strategies may be added in response to changes in the early childhood landscape. Once adopted, the Council will review progress on key strategies at each business meeting and review/update the plan in its entirety annually.

The members of the Oregon Early Learning Council are:

Pam Curtis (chair), Harriet Adair, Vikki Bishop, Martha Brooks, Janet Dougherty-Smith, Tim Freeman, Dana Hargunani, Charles McGee, Eva Rippateau, Christa Rude, Lynne Saxton, , Teri Thalhofer, Jim Tierney, Roberta Weber, Kim Williams, Dick Withnell, Marlene Yesquen, Rob Saxton.

Each member of the Council created to the creation of this plan. Former Early Learning Council member Norm Smith also played a role in its development.

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Goal 1: Ready children - All children enter kindergarten with the skills, experiences and supports to succeed

Success Metrics

- Standards are completed.
- 40% of providers licensed; 30% at C2Q; 15% at 3 star, 10% at 4 star, 5% at 5 star in the quality rating improvement system.
- Increase #/% of children in focus population on subsidy in 3,4, and 5 star programs.
- Increase # of license exempt early learning providers participating in training and professional supports by 25%.
- Increase “career ready” workforce by 25%, increase AA holding work force by 15% and increase BA holding workforce by 10%. (“Career ready” is defined here as obtaining at least a certificate in the state’s career lattice system.)
- Providers of color are proportionally represented in "career ready" workforce.
- Increase by 33% the number of children grades K-3 who are in schools that have
 - a. aligned curricula.
 - b. aligned professional development standards.
 - c. seamless, connected services and transition to kindergarten.

Strategy	Tactic(s)	Key Partners	Executive Sponsor	Timeline
Strategy 1.1 Develop a supply of high quality, community based early learning programs that support the diversity of family values and experiences in our state, across a variety of settings.	1A. Implement a Quality Rating Improvement System for licensed/regulated early learning and development programs in Oregon.	WOU, CCR&R, CBOs who work with child care providers, Head Start Association, AFSCME	Child care and education committee	Full implementation by June 2017; ongoing improvement
	1B. Develop quality community-based early learning development programs using support systems recognized by focus communities.	CBOs who work with these providers; CCR&R	Child care and education committee	Full implementation by June 2017
	1C. Strengthen and support "family friends and neighbor" providers through enhanced training and professional development.	DHS, SEIU, CBOs who work with these providers.	Child care and education committee	June 2016
	1D. Develop and implement one unified set of Early Learning Standards for all early learning and development programs.	Oregon Center for Career Development, OAEYC, Head Start Association, ODE, WOU.	Child care and education committee	Jan. 2016

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Strategy 1.2 Ensure equitable access for children and families to quality early learning and development programs, overcoming traditional barriers of race, culture, income and geography.	1E. Develop and implement a range of mixed use preschool models that includes but not limited to family and center-based care, OPK programs, community-based organizations and public/private schools.	Hubs, CCR&R, CBOs	ELC Executive Committee; Child care and education committee	Dec. 2016 (with ongoing improvement)
	1F. Develop an increased supply of high quality ELDPs in areas of the state that are currently "child care and pre-school deserts" and/or where educational outcomes at kindergarten entry and third grade reading are lagging for our focus population.	Hubs	Child care and education committee	June 2017 (for full implementation - pilot in fall 2015 if we get federal funds)
	1G. Connect Oregon's "Employment Related Day Care" child care subsidy program to quality early learning and develop a tiered reimbursement approach to ERDC and expand access to children/families.	DHS	Child care and education committee	Jan. 2016
	1H. Fully implement contracted slots program.	DHS	Child care and education committee	Jan. 2016
Strategy 1.3 Provide parents with the information and support they need to meet the developmental and educational needs of their children and the child care needs of their families.	1I. Develop a statewide early learning services referral system to ensure that families can connect with the services they need when they need them.	DHS, CCR&R, Hubs, OHA, Parenting hubs	Child care and education committee	July 2016
Strategy 1.4 Develop robust educational and certification pathways for early learning providers	1J. Create and sustain "portable" "stackable" and transferable degrees/pathways to degrees for early learning programs at community colleges and 4-year colleges/universities, accessible regardless of geography.	HECC, community colleges, private colleges & universities, Oregon Center for Career Development.	Child care and education committee	Dec. 2020
	1K. Ensure pathways are accessible, affordable and supportive of non-traditional students through strategies such as coaching, mentoring, etc.	HECC, community colleges, private colleges & universities, Oregon Center for Career Development.		
	1L. Establish a statewide apprenticeship program for early childhood professionals, early childhood teachers and program or center directors.	HECC, community colleges, Oregon Center for Career Development, AFSCME		

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Strategy 1.5 Build a consistent approach and aligned pathway between early childhood services (beginning at age 3) and K-3 education.	1M. Continue to improve the implementation of the statewide KA.	ODE	ELC Executive Committee	Ongoing
	1N. Develop best practice strategies among early learning and development programs, Early Learning Hubs and elementary schools for strong kindergarten transition.	ODE, OEIB, Hubs, CBOs	ELC Executive Committee	June 2016
	1O. Develop shared plans between early learning and development programs and elementary schools/school districts for aligned professional development.	ODE, OEIB, Hubs, CBOs	ELC Executive Committee	June 2016
	1P. Connect and align standards and instructional practices from early learning and development programs through the early grades of elementary school.	ODE, OEIB, Hubs, CBOs	ELC Executive Committee	January 2016

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Goal 2: Stable and Attached Families - Families have the information and support they need to nurture and prepare their children for school

Success Metrics

- Policy agenda adopted.
- Family Stability included as a lens in policy making.
- FRM is consistently operationalized across the state.
- 50% increase in high risk families served.
- 35% decrease in substantiated child abuse and neglect in focus population.
- 50% of families and caregivers who receive information about family role in child development report behavior changes.
- 80% of children/families receiving developmental screening before age 3.

Strategy	Tactic(s)	Key partners	Executive Sponsor	Timeline
Strategy 2.1 Strengthen community supports for family health and well being	2A. Increase access to home based services through child-driven home based services coordination so that children and families have access to the best program for their needs.	OHA	Prenatal-Age 3 committee	July 2016
	2B. Identify state level policy changes that support family well-being and stability.	Family Forward Oregon, SEIU, AFSCME	Prenatal-Age 3 committee	Dec. 2020
	2C. Increase focus on critical aspects of development and attachment for children age 0 - 3 and their families.	DHS, OHA, Hubs	Joint ELC/OHPB subcommittee; Prenatal-Age 3 committee	Jan. 2018
	2D. Support/advocate for implementation of a statewide pay-for-prevention model for child welfare	DHS	ELC Executive Committee	Dec. 2015
	2E. Launch ongoing messaging campaign for families related to key actions that each stage of development as well as critical importance of health and well-being pre-conception to age 8.	Hubs, OHA, DHS Vroom Parenting Hubs, DOHAD	ELC executive committee	June 2015
	2F. Develop a "family stability lens" and systematically include "family stability" in all policy and resource allocation decisions.	DHS, OHA	Joint ELC/OHPB subcommittee	Dec. 2015
	2G. Operationalize the family resource manager function fully.	DHS, OHA, Hubs	ELC Executive Committee	July 2017
	2H. Develop a financial incentive set-aside for Hubs to collaborate with CCOs, DHS and community partners, challenging state partners to establish similar set aside for collaboration in their own budgets as well.	DHS, OHA	ELC Executive Committee	Dec. 2015
	2I. Finalize and implement statewide screening tool and assessment protocol.	DHS, OHA	Joint ELC/OHPB Subcommittee; Prenatal-Age 3 committee	Dec. 2015
	2J. Develop best practice referral pathways statewide.	DHS, Housing & Community Services, ODE, OHA	Joint ELC/OHPB Subcommittee; Prenatal-Age 3 committee	Dec. 2015

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Goal 3: Early Learning Services and Services are Coordinated and Aligned

Success Metrics

- Hubs making meaningful progress on accountability metrics.
- Contracts and state dollars aligned to both statewide and local goals.
- MOUs implemented and working.
- Statewide screening and referral protocols are established.
- Early Learning Passport exists and is operational.
- Comprehensive Children’s Budget exists and is driving policy and at state and local level.
- Data system exists and is operational.

Strategy	Tactic(s)	Key Partners	Executive Sponsor	Timeline
Strategy 3.1 Strengthen birth through 3rd grade policy, planning and service coordination.	3A. Support and continually improve local system building work through the Early Learning Hubs.	Hubs, DHS, OHA	Executive Committee	Ongoing
	3B. Develop an approach to contracting and contract administration for programs assigned to ELD that advances equity and system coordination goals.	ELD, contractors in network	Equity Committee	July 2015
	3C. Develop MOUs that articulate coordination and referral and accountability across state agencies.	Hubs, DHS, OHA, Housing & Community Services	Executive Committee	Dec. 2015
	3D. Solidify screening connection/referral process between EI/ECSE and early learning programs.	ODE, SICC	Executive Committee	July 2017
	3E. Create a developmental passport that shows the progressive path of positive child & family development tasks/outcomes beginning pre-birth through 3rd grade with 3rd grade culminating in on-track 3 rd grade reading score.	ODE (data team), OEIB, OHA, DHS, DOHAD	Executive Committee	July 2020
	See also Tactic 1P			
Strategy 3.2 Strengthen systems that support cost-effective results driven services.	3F. Biennial development of comprehensive children's budget.	ODE fiscal, OHA, DHS, DAS	Executive Committee	Ongoing
	3G. Develop early learning data system.	ODE data team; OEIB, DHS, DAS	Executive Committee	July 2017

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Goal 4: The Early Learning Council is accountable/accessible to its constituents

Success Metrics

- 25% increase in stakeholder opportunities to give feedback and inform early learning policy through Early Learning Council.
- Increase Hub and Provider understanding of focus populations, as measured by:
 - Implementation of recommendations resulting from evaluation of equity strategies in programs and Hubs; and
 - Self reported use of equity toolkit by 100% of Hubs.

Strategy	Tactic(s)	Key Partners	Executive Sponsor	Timeline
Strategy 4.1 Ensure implementation of the equity lens across the ELC's work.	4A. Identify and analyze service disparities for focus populations by hub region	ODE, DHS, OHA, Hubs	Equity Implementation Committee	August 2015
	4B. Create positive, anti-racism, anti-bias and anti-privilege environments within the Early Learning Council, Early Learning Division, Early Learning Hubs and provider organizations that promote knowledge, acceptance, inclusion and respect.	ELC, ELD, Hubs, provider organizations	Equity Implementation Committee	March 2018
	4C. Provide training and support for individuals throughout the Early Learning System on how racism and privilege play out in the workplace, early learning spaces, and community.	ODE Equity Unit, HR, Hubs, CBO's	Equity Implementation Committee	March 2016
	4D. Create a specific plan identifying the work that needs to be done as well as establish metrics to measure progress.	Breakthrough Team	Equity Implementation Committee	June 2015
	4E. Policies created and adopted to ensure individuals are protected from retaliation if they bring up issues of racism, bigotry or prejudice.	ODE Equity Unit, HR, Hubs, CBO's	Equity Implementation Committee	March 2018
	4F. Develop disaggregated data collection standards for a) Early Learning Hub Grantees b) Early Learning Hub Leadership c) The Early Learning Hub Provider Workforce d) The Early Learning Division Workforce e) The Early Learning Council	ELC, ELD, Hubs, provider organizations	Equity Implementation Committee	March 2016
	4G. Establish metrics to measure progress toward becoming a culturally responsive organization in nine domains 1) Organizational Commitment, Leadership & Governance 2) Racial Equity Policies & Implementation Practices 3) Organizational Climate, Culture & Communications 4) Service-Based Equity 5) Service-User Voice & Influence 6) Workforce Composition & Quality 7) Community Collaboration 8) Resource Allocation & Contracting Practice 9) Data, Metrics & Continuous Improvement	Coalition of Communities of Color Center to Advance Racial Equity	Equity Implementation Committee	March 2018

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Any budgetary system for the ELC, ELD, and Hubs shall be modified to include priority funding for early learning services to underserved populations. This includes modifying eligibility requirements for the monies available in the Early Learning System so that underserved populations are served and prioritized.		Equity Implementation Committee	
4H. Develop consistent approach for listening to communities/incorporating feedback/vetting resulting action, and ensure perspectives from underserved communities are regularly heard at ELC meetings.	Hubs, CBOs	Equity Committee	Ongoing
4I. Develop a community engagement campaign to elevate early learning resources	Hubs, CBOs	ELC Executive Committee	December 2016 for initial engagement
4J. Sharpen ELC messages and broaden communications	Hubs, CBOs	ELC Executive Committee	Ongoing
4K. Develop toolkit to support communities and programs in implementing equity lens.		Equity Committee	March 2015