

Wednesday, May 1, 2013

Co-Chairs and members of the Education Subcommittee of Ways & Means, thank you for the opportunity to testify. For the record, my name is Eduardo Angulo, chairman and executive director of the Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality. Our member organizations are PCUN, Oregon Farmworkers Union, CAUSA, the largest pro-immigrants' right coalition in the Northwest, Mano a Mano Family Center, Latinos Unidos Siempre (LUS), Willamette University Latino Students and our Oregon Parent Organizing Project.

We are also members of the Oregon Alliance for Education Equity (OEAA). The Alliance is an umbrella organization of over 25 African American, Latino, the 9 Tribes of Oregon Governments and Pacific and Micronesian and Asian Communities part of APANO.

Our Coalition's organizations leaders and members and allies are all in full support of the HB 3232 which is about all funding the necessary investments in education to support effective partnerships between the schools and parents of the most academically behind students in our public education system: Students of color and English Language Learners (ELLs).

The Governor's aspirational goal of the 40-40-20 by 2025 and the Oregon Education Investment Board's recent approval of the Equity Lens strategies to "overcome challenges associated with race, ethnicity, poverty and language" give our Latino farmworking and immigrant families a renewed hope for their future and that their children will have a chance to reach their full potential.

Currently we have 56,000 children who are ELLs throughout our state schools who are 40 to 60 percentage points behind their white peers in reading.

We in the Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality with the help of two master teachers and hundreds of low-income Spanish speaking parents have developed an outcome based Parent-led Spanish literacy program that in the past year and half has been transforming the lives of hundreds of Latino ELL children from Kinder to 2nd Grade with the goal of having them be a grade level in reading by third grade (attached).

In our **Reading Together We Advance** pilot here a NE Salem last year, we saw firsthand the importance of *early* intervention, in or before kindergarten, which is why we are adding pre-kindergarten support for parents, to have these children *start* ready for school. Without this intervention, we saw that 2nd grade students were starting the year reading, on average, just barely above a kindergarten level.

First graders *also* started out reading just barely above a kindergarten level, but below a first-grade level. 2nd and 1st graders started the year reading at the *almost the same* level. 2nd graders had essentially *not* grown as readers in the first grade.

At the end of the year, because of only 6 weeks of Leyendo Avanzamos intervention, this group of 1st graders was *ready* for 2nd grade, having grown in their reading, on average, more than one grade level's worth. The 2nd graders, who had been so far behind, had regained hope and began to close the gap, also progression to a late first-grade level, on average.

The kindergartners, of course, are set up for success. They are ready to learn in first grade, ending on average slightly above their grade level target and with parents who are equipped to support their growth as readers during the summer and throughout the next year.

If we stop here, stop now, these kids will not progress. If we don't continue this intervention and to support students as they grow older – raising the bar – our kids will stall. *We cannot, must not, stop now* (attached find our most recent progress report of our current program in the 3 lowest scoring schools here in NE Salem and a packet with all our outcome based family involvement programs)!

We cannot expect to reach our 40-40-20 North Start aspirational goal by 2025 for all our children if they cannot learn to read at grade level from Pre-K to 2nd Grade.

Please support HB 3232

Thank You!

OREGON ALLIANCE FOR EDUCATION EQUITY (OAEE)

MAY 2013

VISION

Oregon Communities of Color, English Language Learners (ELLs), advocacy organizations, and other allies are united to ensure that schools promote equity, eliminate disparities, and value diversity so that *all* students are prepared to become successful adults.

MISSION

The Oregon Alliance for Education Equity is a non-partisan coalition of community organizations that represent communities of color, English Language Learners (ELLs), education advocates, families/parents, allies and other stakeholders. We are united to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in education and ensure that students of color and students learning English graduate from high school prepared to be successful adults and global citizens. We educate, advocate, and engage with decision-makers to support policy changes that promote equity for students in and out of school.

ORGANIZATION MEMBERS ON MARCH 1, 2013:

Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality, APANO, NAACP Branches from Salem-Keizer, Corvallis, & Eugene/Springfield, Centro Cultural of Washington County, Latino Network of Portland, Portland Urban League, Unete from Medford, Stand for Children, Chalkboard Project, REAP Inc., Portland Teachers Program, Oregon Native American 9 Tribal Governments, Oregon Indian Education Association, Casa Latinos Unidos de Benton County, Adelante Mujeres, Siwash Resources, Oregon Commission on Black Affairs, Lyn and Benton Hispanic Advisory Committee, UNA VOZ: Latino Leadership and Advocacy Inc. & ACLU of Oregon

Supported in Principle By:

National Council of La Raza, Education Trust, Oregon Commissions on Hispanic, and Asian Affairs, Self Enhancement Inc., Oregon Diversity Institute, Latinos In Leadership from Reynolds, Portland Parent Union, BPI, & Si Se Puede Oregon, Mano a Mano Family Center, Una Voz Coalition from Jackson County, Latinos Unidos Siempre (LUS), PCUN, CAUSA, Blacks In Government & Center for Intercultural Organizing.



Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality

Family Literacy: Leyendo Avanzamos

What Does the Coalition Do?

SKCE works to close the opportunity gap faced by low-income, minority students in Oregon. We speak up in state & district decision-making. We provide Latino youth with leadership development opportunities. Most of all, we organize and train low-income, Spanish-speaking parents to support their children. After all, a parent is the first teacher and best advocate for a child.

What Does *Leyendo* Do?

Leyendo Avanzamos (Reading Together We Advance) supports low-income, Spanish-speaking parents so they can help their own children read on grade level at a young age and stay on track. We do this work in two ways:

- During the school year, groups of parents from select elementary schools meet weekly with highly trained parent facilitators from the same community. In these trainings, parents build their skills, practice working with their children, and learn how to engage with their children's teachers.
- During the summer, we organize field trips designed to help parents build their children's oral literacy. The trips are rich with activity-specific vocabulary and offer learning strategies parents can use to continue vocabulary development.

Why *Leyendo Avanzamos*?

Research shows that when parents read with their children and engage with their children's schools, their children are more likely to succeed, even if parental support occurs in the parents' native language. Building literacy skills in Spanish is shown to facilitate deeper learning and greater success in English. Parental support for early literacy will help students get and stay on track, closing the gaps in high school graduation and achievement faced by low-income Latino students in the Salem-Keizer School District and around the state.

How does *Leyendo* work? Who is involved?

Bilingual, bicultural Master Teachers coordinate the program and train the parent facilitators, ensuring alignment with Salem-Keizer School District's curricula and standards. For 2012-2013, we have partnered with three elementary schools in NE Salem (Four Corners, Scott, and Cesar E. Chavez). Families are invited to

participate if their child's kindergarten, first, or second-grade teacher identifies they are falling behind, and we anticipate serving more than 240 children.

A hot meal is served, and then children receive educational childcare while their parents learn new skills. Finally, parents – supported by trained parent facilitators – try their new skills with their children. Parent facilitators visit families at home if needed.



What are *Leyendo's* Goals & Accomplishments?

In the short term, we aim for at least 80% of participating children to end the school year on or within one level of grade level in reading.

Long term, we hope to see Latino children at our partner schools catching up to their white peers on reading tests and more Latino youth who received this support graduating high school on-time.

In addition, we hope to see children enjoying reading and parents actively involved in their children's schools, building a culture of learning among all parents there.

Our 2011-2012 pilot at Four Corners, where we trained parents during the school year, showed promise:

- In all, **77%** of participants ended the year in **good** (within one level of grade level) or **excellent** (on or above grade level) standing.
- On average, Kindergarteners **doubled** their reading level (averaging level 1.2 at the start and 3 at the end), and **all** kindergarteners ended in good or excellent standing.
- First and second graders improved **five reading** levels on average.

For more information, visit www.skcequality.org.



Student Outcomes from Oct.-Dec. 2012 *Reading We Advance* at Scott, Chavez, and Four Corners Elementary Schools

Our Program

“Reading Together We Advance”– or “Leyendo Avanzamos” – is our family literacy program. Parents are empowered as their children’s home teacher because they receive the tools they need in the workshops, led by parent facilitators who are native Spanish-speakers and share cultural heritage.

The program is a partnership between teachers and principals from three low-income schools in NE Salem (Scott, Four Corners, and César Chávez elementary schools) and SKCE. Designed by a bilingual, bicultural master teacher, our curriculum is district-aligned. We also use the district process monitoring assessment to measure reading growth. Plus, instructional assistants from each school work with the parents in each class, teachers identify students, and principals include the program in their budgets.

Initial Data

Data presented here reflects outcomes in the first seven weeks of the school year with our first cohort. Parents who attend at least **four** sessions with their child are active participants and are included in these results. We have found that attending four sessions is required for the program to make a difference.

Students represented in data are from low-income schools in NE Salem with high percentages of English Language Learners. Specifically: 24 Kindergarteners at César Chávez Elementary, 15 First Graders at Four Corners Elementary, and 20 Second Graders at Scott Elementary. There will be two more

cohorts of students at each school this year, and we will report on all students this summer.

Test Used

Scores are based on student performance on EDL2, the Spanish-language evaluation of reading development used by Salem-Keizer School District.

EDL levels are:

- Kindergarten: A, 1, 2, 3
- First Grade: 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16
- Second Grade: 18, 20, 24, 28.)

At the start of the year, Kindergarteners are tested using the official EDL pre-assessment, which tests letter and sound recognition. All scores for Kindergarteners on this report utilize the pre-assessment.

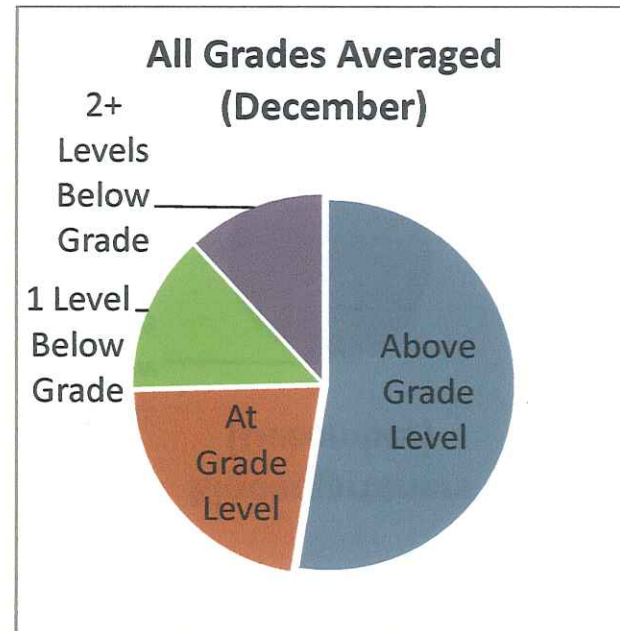
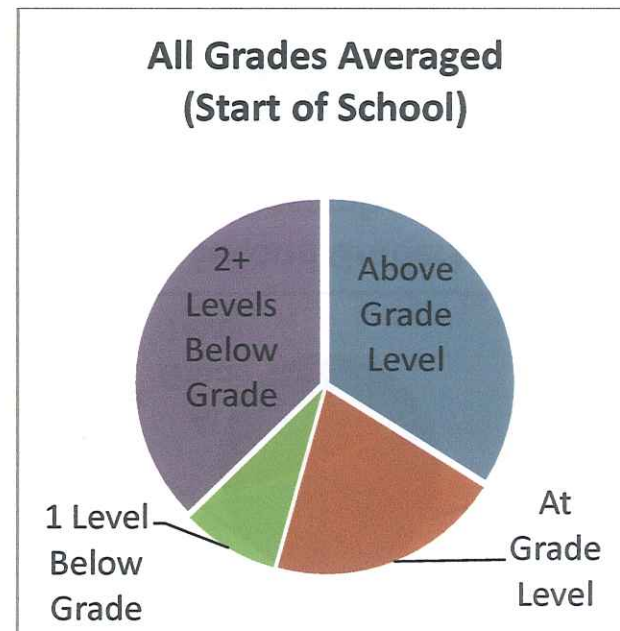
Data Presented

In this report, line graphs demonstrate the progress of students in the “Reading We Advance” program (participants) relative to target scores for their grade level and the time of year. Pie graphs demonstrate the percentages of students on or below grade level entering the school year or after the seven week program.

Note: kindergarteners are expected to start out scoring a “0” on the pre-assessment, so “At Grade Level” at the start signifies a score of “0”.

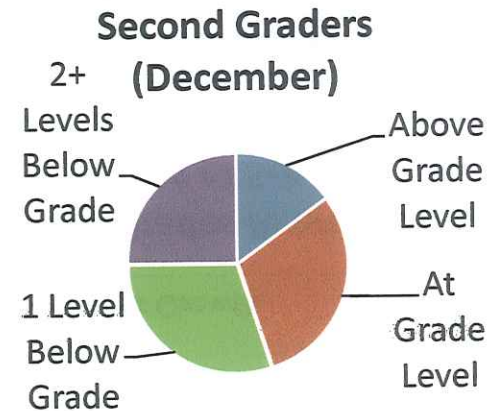
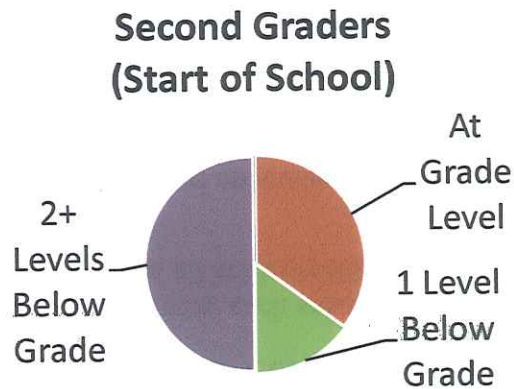
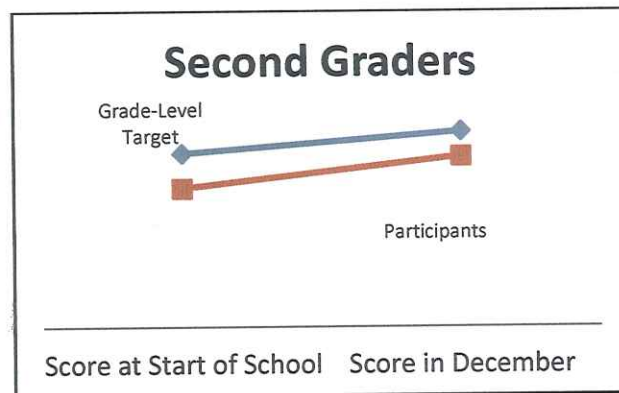
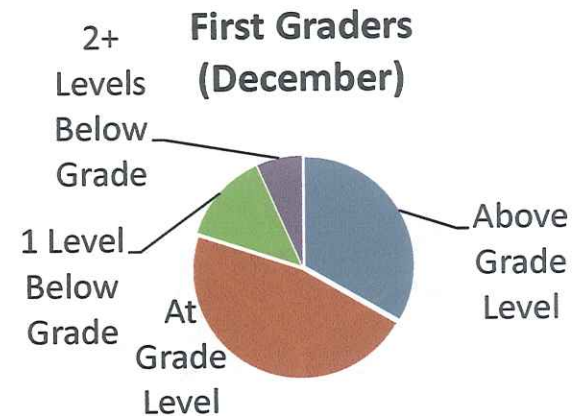
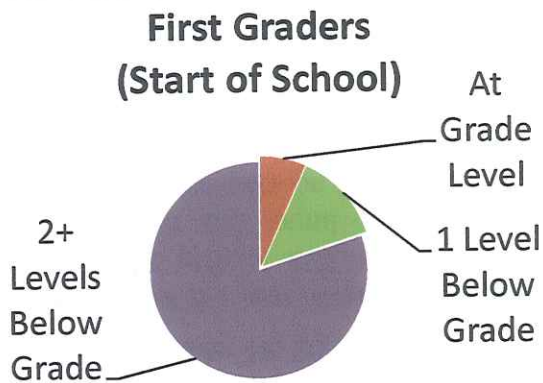
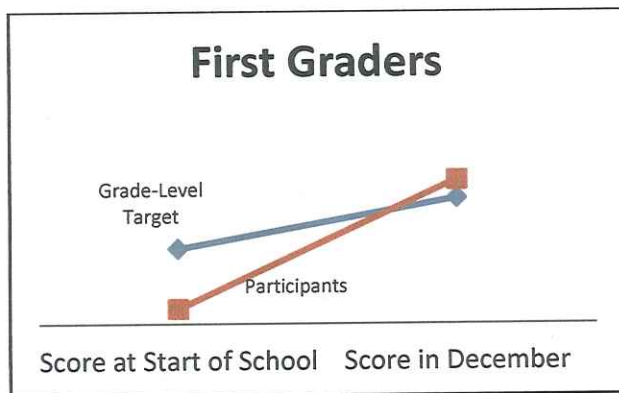
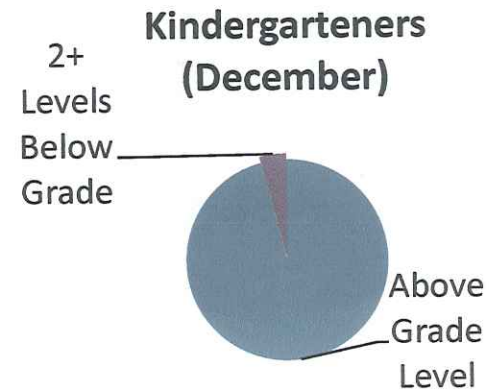
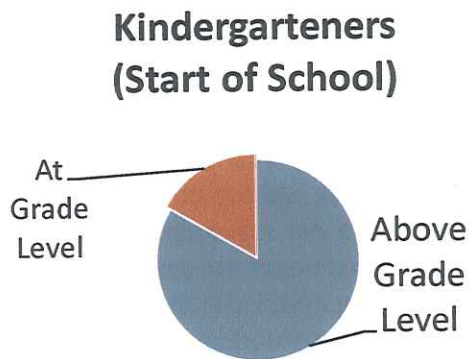
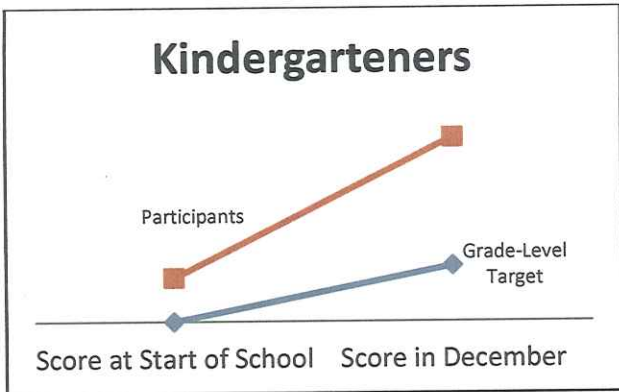
Grade	Target at Start	Target in Dec.	Participant at Start	Participant in Dec.
K	0	11	8.9	36.3
1 st	3	4 or 6	0.6	5.7
2 nd	16	18	12.8	15.7

Overall Student Growth





Student Outcomes from Oct.-Dec. 2012 *Reading We Advance* at Scott, Chavez, and Four Corners Elementary Schools





Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality

Youth Leadership Development

How Do We Develop Youth Leadership?

The Coalition offers a cluster of youth programs, providing multiple pathways for youth to develop leadership and critical-thinking skills while working collaboratively on a meaningful project. Currently, our programs are:

- **First Lego League Robotics**, competitive teams of 9-14 year olds that focuses on programming.
- **Video Production**, a group of youth aged 11-17 who create informational and/or short films.
- **Mock Trial**, competitive high school teams that build research skills and public speaking ability.
- **Grupo de Apoyo**, support group for families to prevent gang involvement and teen pregnancy.

These programs currently serve about 50 young people.

Why Develop Youth Leadership?

Our youth programs create opportunities to develop the leadership skills of low-income immigrant, first, and second generation Latino youth in the Salem/Keizer. When young people are more engaged and learning outside of the school day, they tend to be more successful in school. Each of our leadership development programs offers youth the opportunity to take on a challenge and increase their confidence and skills as they work to accomplish it.

These programs help students connect more with school and increase the likelihood they will graduate high school and go on to college or a career, thus helping to close the gaps in high school graduation and achievement faced by low-income Latino students in Salem-Keizer School District and around the state.

In addition, these programs are led by young Latinos who are themselves either immigrants or children of immigrants. Growing current and future leaders is critical to closing the achievement gap.

How Does each Youth Program Work?

First Lego League Robotics Teams – Twelve Latino students meet at least weekly to prepare for competition. They compete in three areas: programming robots to complete missions, presenting about the FLL core values and how they've exhibited these values, and presenting about the problem and solution they've identified on this year's theme. For 2012-13, the theme

is "Senior Solutions": youth must find an innovative solution for a problem that a real senior faces.

Video Production & Summer Film Practicum – Youth in video production grow as leaders as they learn to film, edit, plan, and interview to create finished pieces. The group meets twice a week.

During the school year, eight students create a 30-minute monthly show, which is informational in nature and airs on cable-access television. During the summer, twelve students work together to create short films.



Mock Trial Teams & the Nathaniel Cordova Debate Team – Eighteen youth hone their research, critical-thinking, and public speaking skills, meeting weekly during the school year to prepare for Mock Trial competitions. The teams also meet twice a week as the Nathaniel Cordova Debate Team in the summer to keep their skills sharp.

Oregon Chief Justices Edwin J. Peterson and Paul J. De Muniz volunteer to support the teams, as do local attorneys. These experts provide the youth with mentoring and feedback.

Youth Empowerment Workshops – These workshops empower at-risk youth, helping them to increase their sense of self-efficacy and responsibility to their community and to raise their personal goals and their sense of what is possible for them. Over a series of six workshops, a skilled mentor and facilitator works towards each of six goals to build the confidence and abilities of the youth.

For more information, visit www.skcequality.org.



Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality

POP: Parent Organizing Program

What Does the Coalition Do?

SKCE works to close the opportunity and achievement gap faced by students of color and English Language Learners in Oregon. We stay involved in state & district decision-making. We provide leadership development opportunities for youth and parents. Most of all, we recruit, organize and train low-income, Spanish-speaking parents to support their children and get involved in their schools.

What Does Our Parent Organizing Program Do?

We reach out to Latino parents in the Spanish-speaking immigrant community and provide language appropriate training about the school system and how to help their children succeed. Our leadership model is peer to peer, and POP workshops are taught by trained parent facilitators who began as students of our first workshops. Ongoing events and volunteer opportunities throughout the year keep parents engaged, build skills, bring families together, and help children stay engaged in learning. POP parents also have the opportunity to learn how to advocate and participate in the larger community by attending hearings and speaking with civic leaders and administrators who are decision makers at state, district, and local levels.

Why the Parent Organizing Program?

We found that the majority of Latino and migrant families were un-informed about how to participate in the education of their children and advocate for their academic needs. Most speak little or no English, many experience significant poverty, and many lack a formal education even in their native language. These factors contribute to a great divide between families and schools, parents and children, and teachers and students. With no knowledge of our system and of their rights and responsibilities, schools previously assumed that most parents showed a lack of concern for the education of their children. We learned differently when we addressed the obstacles they faced.

How does the POP work? Who is involved?

For more information, visit www.skcequality.org.

All of the programmatic components of the Coalition—workshops, trainings, events, parent and youth leadership development, mentoring and literacy programs—grew from the original POP. Multiple venues allow for interaction with teachers, administrators, counselors, and other school staff—providing parents with experiences that contribute to their growth, the result of which makes them part of the solution: partners, collaborators, mentors, advocates, and community leaders.



Our curriculum, “Educate and Inspire,” was created by our own experts and parents working together, and is grounded in Popular Education philosophies and strategies. Bilingual, bicultural master teachers of ELL education provide professional training to parent facilitators. Parents learn best practices, how to work with peers, resolve conflicts, and how to mentor appropriately. Workshops and events are held both at SKCE’s Center and at local schools.

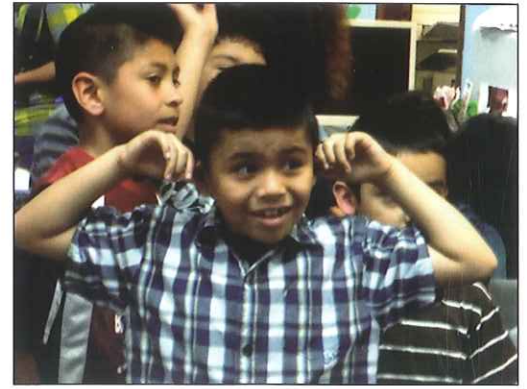
What are the POP’s Goals & Accomplishments?

With the mission of SKCE in mind, the Parent Organizing Project has, as its primary objective, the raising of consciousness among Latino families of the great necessity for their positive participation, for understanding of the state educational system, and for taking a role in the formal education of their children and in school decision-making in order to ensure a quality education for their children.

Since 2003, more than a thousand parents have been impacted by POP and the current line-up of programs we now have for youth and families have grown out of the work of the Parent Organizing Project.

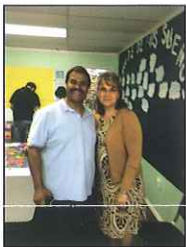
SKCE

The Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality



www.skcequality.org

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Reading Program Grows Leaders and Helps Readers Get Back on Track

SKCE piloted our **Reading We Advance** program in partnership with **Four Corners Elementary School** during the 2011-12 school year. Our team of master teachers and parent leaders offered three six-week sessions for students who teachers believed were at high risk of ending the school year below grade level. We started with second graders in the fall, worked with first graders in the winter, and ended with kindergarteners in the spring. Our group continued to grow as families from previous sessions kept coming back to learn more.

74 participating families finished the year with a festive graduation party in June at Four Corners.

Reading We Advance is aligned with the District curriculum. The goal is to help students improve their literacy skills and be close to, on, or above grade level by the end of the school year. Throughout the program parents learn about their role as teachers at home and what, specifically, they can do to help their children succeed academically.

SKCE parent leaders worked individually with students and their families at the sessions and home visits. The leaders developed games and activities to keep the students engaged and taught them to the parents. They regularly assessed each student and customized materials for each family. About half of the families received home visits. School teachers and staff co-ordinated the sessions and reinforced activities at school.

The evaluation results from the

program were very positive. All of the students made progress and advanced through multiple reading levels. Parents were very satisfied with the program and requested continued assistance and programming.

This school year we are offering the program at **Four Corners, Cesar E. Chavez and Scott Elementary Schools.**



Reading We Advance June Graduation Party at Four Corners Elementary School for 74 Families

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

For the past 13 years Coalition leaders have invested over 5 million dollars to be part of the solution to the persistent achievement gap between students of color and English Language Learners (ELLs) and their white counterparts in Oregon.

We firmly believe that to turn the dismal graduation rate around (currently 50% for ELLs) we ALL must hold ourselves mutually accountable for the current achievement gap.

From the beginning, we created programs backed up by research on the importance of meaningful parental involvement to transform our schools for the better. Recent research from the **University of Chicago** demonstrated that schools with positive parent-community ties were 10 times more likely to improve in math and 4 times more likely to improve in reading than similar schools without those ties.

All the work we have been doing for the past 13 years educating parents and developing parent leaders is validated by **Dr. Rudy Crew**, Chief Oregon Education Officer, in his book *Only Connect: The Way to Save Our Schools*.

In the September meeting of the **Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB)** there was a controversy around a vote to exclude parents from being voting members on the local **Achievement Compact Committees**.

Dr. Crew said: "we cannot be afraid of a new wrinkle - we must test the theory of 'what is equal is equal.' Having the parents involved means that the process may take longer but I don't see the harm in it. When we signed up for the challenge this is what we meant to be up to the elbow. Parents are in their role and I want to hear from the person who deals with the endgame of what I do in schools."

In the Coalition, we firmly believe that parents and community leaders need to be part of the goal setting and oversight for the Achievement Compacts in our Oregon schools. We ALL need to help parents become the "demand parents" Dr. Crew writes about in his book if we are truly *serious* about holding ourselves mutually accountable for the historically dismal achievement gap in our schools.
 - **Eduardo Angulo**

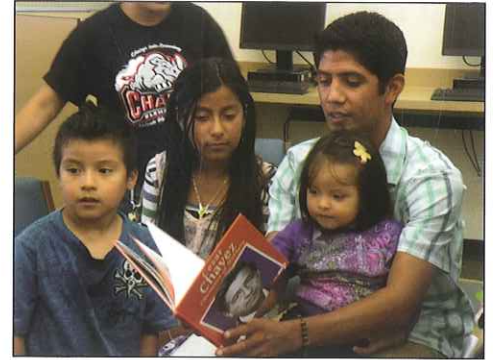
Cesar E. Chavez Elementary Students are Off to a Great Start

This summer we started working with **27 families from Cesar E. Chavez** - one of two new elementary schools in Salem-Keizer - to help kindergarteners arrive at school ready to learn. We hosted families at our Community Center while their new school was under construction. Families participated in educational field trips to the **library, Bush Park, and AC Gilbert Discovery Village**.

The new school is especially important to SKCE because hundreds of community members supported naming the school after

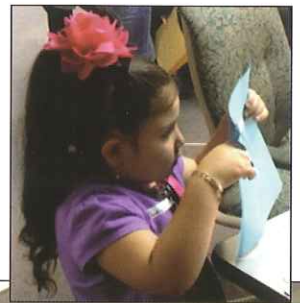
the great unifier and organizer Cesar E. Chavez - he is a true hero who helped many of our Spanish-speaking farm-working families.

SKCE plans on offering parent workshops, our literacy program, and ongoing support for the new school. This investment is especially important because the school will not qualify for **Title I** support in the first year.



Anthony Chavez, grandson of Cesar E. Chavez, reads to new Chavez Chargers after speaking at the grand opening.

Our Summer Oral Language (SOL) Family Literacy Program helped 27 new Cesar E. Chavez kindergarteners arrive at school ready to learn at school & at home.



Mother Facilitator Maria de Jesus helps lead an activity where kindergarten moms write down dreams for their children on clouds and put them on our "dream wall" while students have fun with AC Gilbert Discovery Village activities.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2011-12

- ✓ During the 2011-12 school year SKCE parent leaders offered 67 workshops for 1,336 parents with hot meals and educational childcare for 1,868 children.
- ✓ The SKCE team helped coordinate and presented three workshops at the **10th Annual Parent Conference** on March 10th.
- ✓ Our parent leaders successfully mobilized the community in support of naming the new NE Salem elementary school after **Cesar E. Chavez**. Hundreds of people wrote letters, testified and attended hearings. **Si, Se Puede!**
- ✓ Parent leaders and master teachers provided literacy support during the summer and throughout the school year for 125 families. The programs resulted in marked improvement in reading scores for students participating in the program.
- ✓ SKCE purchased two vans and a minibus to help transport families to our events and programs.
- ✓ We put on eight family fun nights at **Northgate Park** this summer. We served dinner, played soccer, and offered crafts for an average of 300 people each Friday. We partnered with the **Marion-Polk Food Share** and received donations from the **Learning Palace, Kettle Chips, & Bi-Mart**.
- ✓ We contracted with **Sequoia Charter School** to help Latino families understand the **Montessori philosophy** so they can make an informed decision about whether or not they should send their children to the school. The school is in the planning stages and hopes to open in 2013-14.
- ✓ SKCE provided our **Oregon Training of Trainers (TOT)** program last year in two new communities: **Portland** and **Hillsboro**. We continue to support parent leaders in **Washington, Multnomah, Jackson, Linn, Lane** and **Marion Counties**. In January, 48 of our trained parent leaders gathered for a day-long retreat at our **Oregon Parent Education Center in Salem**.

"Nacho Cordova" Debate Team Expands Offerings

SKCE is working hard to expand our program offerings for every member of the family. We are especially interested in providing opportunities for teens to succeed and grow their confidence and leadership skills. This past year we began exploring a debate team for youth in the community.

We hired **Ranfis Villatoro** to coordinate our youth programs; Patricia Guzman, Shamir Cervantes and Blanca Gutierrez are coaches. **Chief Justice Ed Peterson and Chief Justice Paul DeMuniz** are sponsoring the program and coaching and mentoring youth. We currently have eight youth participating in the program and are recruiting additional youth. The goal is to transition the program to a 24- participant Mock-Trial team.

Sustainer Member Option Expands Donor Choices

Donors at the **SKCE Tamale Luncheon** last fall wanted to be able to regularly donate to SKCE as sustainers - which means they have a set amount automatically taken out of their account (debit or credit card) each month. We looked into a variety of options and chose **Network for Good** as our provider.

We are really excited to offer this service to supporters, along with the option of making a one-time donation with credit cards. We will, of course, still happily accept checks and cash. To sign up or make a one-time donation with a credit or debit card please visit our website www.skcequality.org and click **donate**.

Your donations support our programs and help close the achievement gap, support families, and develop new parent and youth leaders. We count on individuals like you to keep our Community Center open and thriving.



Chief Justices Ed Peterson and Paul DeMuniz help prepare the SKCE Debate Team members.

We Added Three New Educate & Inspire Units

In 2011-12 we developed three new units, piloted them in the community, and revised them based on feedback. The first unit, Unit 14, focuses on understanding teen pregnancy and offers specific suggestions for families to keep youth engaged and communicating about what is happening at school and with their friends. The unit helps parents understand peer pressure.

Unit 15 focuses on gang prevention. The unit helps parents understand the gang culture and appeal for some youth. It also addresses peer pressure and the importance of communication at home. There is ample time for discussion and sharing ideas in the workshop.

Unit 16 addresses the challenges Latino youth face as they struggle to find a bridge between two cultures. The unit outlines specific ways parents can support their children to keep them in school and graduating.

The new units will be added to the offerings in Salem-Keizer this year and shared with our **Oregon TOT partners**. Our three units on family communication and our stand alone unit on grade level standards were added in 2011-12 and were very well received.

Contact SKCE

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The Class of 2025 Working to Achieve the Statewide 20-20-40 Vision from the Start!



27 new Cesar E. Chavez Kindergarten families celebrate the completion of our Summer Oral Language Program at the AC Gilbert Discovery Village.

Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality
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Salem Oregon 97302

**The SKCE Mission
Equity, Accountability, and Unity**

To Promote Equity for Our Children in the Salem/Keizer Public School District and in the Community.

To Advocate for the Respect of Civil and Human Rights of All People in Our Community.

To Seek Accountability from All Salem/Keizer Community Administrators, Policy Makers, Staff and Employees.

To Unite the Salem/Keizer Community and Speak with ONE Voice to END Discrimination and Inequality.

We Support and Network with all Statewide Organizations and Educational Advocates who Support OUR Mission.