

SB 213: Early Learning Hubs

Senate Human Services and Early Childhood Committee

March 1, 2015

Chair Sara Gelser, Vice Chair Olsen and Members of the Committee,

For the record, I am Audrey Cant, Imbler Elementary Kindergarten Teacher. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 213. SB 213 to ensure the Early Learning Hubs exist permanently. I encourage you to see that the Early Learning Hubs live as networks in local communities to align early learning systems, support thriving families, and ensure children are ready to succeed in kindergarten and beyond.

Research has shown that a child's brain develops more in the first five years of life than at any other time. We have read many studies regarding the relationship between students who are able to read at a third grade level, by the time they are in third grade, and their graduation rate of success. The relationship exists between early learning and third grade reading scores, as well. This type of data is of no value if not acted upon with change. This is not just another good idea out of many, it is sound. It is an investment in the future of this state and country. If the goal is 40-40-20 then look at children before they enter a school building and allow for educational, health, and life supports to be in place from the very beginning of a child's life.

It is the responsibility of our communities to ensure that the experiences a child has during their early years create a strong foundation for future success. This Hub has created partnerships that cross school door boundaries and are evolutionary in change for early learners. Families can, and will, be changed with the support and opportunities shared through the Hub. The ability to identify that yes a young child's life experiences have value in the kindergarten classroom, and yes a young family will be able to find the tools and support they need to raise healthy, viable, and achieving family members is key.

The hub is creating new partnerships across K-12 schools, early education, health, human services and business that will change the way we currently support young children and families in our region and lead to more effective and efficient services. By connecting to families as early as possible we are allowing greater academic and student success K-12. Thus furthering the need for educators to continue networking and building their own teaching practices.

I have directly see a change in the network created to collaborate and create change in classrooms and daycare centers through this experience. Our local Professional Learning Team has made great strides in changing family education and involvement, as well as behavior and teaching practices. This Early Learning Hub has allowed for more than an exchange of ideas, it has allowed growth that reaches into all the communities involved.

On a personal level, our local Professional Learning Team, has transformed the behavior management I use in my classroom. This team has strengthened my classroom instructional practices and allowed professional conversation to transpire. The change is contagious and fulfilling.

It is a proud and noble endeavor to change the life of another person. Leave your mark on building smarter and stronger leaders for tomorrow. It starts in the beginning, the young

child. For the reasons stated, I urge you to support SB 213 and transform early learning in our home state of Oregon.

Sincerely,

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