

Morrow County School District

Serving the Families of Boardman, Heppner, and Irrigon in Northeastern Oregon



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SB 213: Early Learning Hubs

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

Senate Human Services and Early Childhood Committee:

For the record, I Dirk Dirksen, Superintendent, Morrow County School District am submitting testimony in support of SB 213. SB 213 makes the Early Learning Hubs permanent and continues the work local communities have undertaken to align early learning systems, support thriving families and ensure children are ready to succeed in kindergarten.

We know that getting to 40-40-20 will require investing in children before they enter the school it is the key to economic prosperity and is one of the best things we can do to set a child up for success. A child's brain develops more in the first five years than at any other time...and I can think of few other programs that can make a higher return on investment.

As an educator I see firsthand the impact of investing early, as a result of our partnership and innovation grant, our community has seen children and families benefiting from the early learning and K-12 collaboration. We've seen more parent education opportunities, more families connecting with teachers and asking questions, etc. Our goal is to ensure that students enter the classroom with greater literacy, numeracy and social and emotional skills and it is has been my experience that the implementation of Early Learning Hubs have improved our quality of services for children and families.

Our Blue Mountain Early Learning Hub has also created 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.

Having our educators better connected to early learning programs and services in the communities Morrow County serves has given me greater insight and helped me strengthen our knowledge and understanding of one another and they have impacted the learning experience our school district offers within our own classroom.

Lastly, The Blue Mountain Early Learning Hub works! It is changing the way we meet the needs of children and families in our community.

I strongly urge you to support SB 213 and this transformation of early learning in Oregon.

Dirk Dirksen,

Superintendent

Morrow County Schools, in partnership with families and communities, provide each student the opportunity to develop values, knowledge, skills and self-confidence to become life-long learners and responsible citizens.

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