

February, 2015

TO: **State Legislators**

FROM: **Early Learning Hub, Inc. of Marion County**

RE: **Early Learning Investments**

Patrice Altenhofen  
Family Building Blocks

Dean Andretta  
Community Member

Rod Calkins  
Marion County Health Department

Donalda Dodson  
Oregon Child Development Coalition

Bill Guest  
Willamette Valley Community Health

David Hallett  
Chemeketa Community College

Jamie Hamilton  
ELH Parent Advisory Committee

Steve Kuhn  
Community Member

Chris Leno  
Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde

Sue Miller  
Community Member

Dave Novotney  
Willamette Education Service District

Sam Osborn  
Oregon Department of Human Services

Annalivia Palazzo-Angulo  
Salem-Keizer Coalition for Equality

Cory Peek  
ELH Parent Advisory Committee

Christy Perry  
Salem-Keizer School District

Chuck Ransom  
Woodburn School District

Jon Reeves  
Mid-Willamette Valley Community  
Action Agency

Jim Seymour  
Catholic Community Services

Ella Taylor  
Teaching Research Institute, Western  
Oregon University

Melinda Veliz  
Community Member

We are writing to urge your support for additional investments in early learning systems and strategies for children and families in Oregon. **Research is conclusive that investing in young children from birth to age 5 provides a 10:1 lifelong return through improved health, increased graduation rates, competitive workforce, reduced incarceration and stable families.** (*James Heckman reference*)

Our community has brought together leaders in healthcare, education, social services, early childhood and business in partnership with our Parent Advisory Committee to develop strategies for preparing children for Kindergarten. Through Early Learning Hub, Inc., we are finding **new ways to collaborate to strengthen the early learning system** to reduce the unacceptable achievement gaps among our Kindergartners.

Based on low assessment scores and high rates of poverty and diversity, we have identified 16 elementary schools in 4 school districts to serve as our focus school areas. In these neighborhoods, we have:

- Established **professional development communities** of Kindergarten teachers, preschool teachers and child care providers to align and coordinate their services.
- Provided **parent education and engagement** activities for families of children ages 0-5.
- Coordinated **developmental screenings** for 0-5 year olds to identify delays early.
- Expanded the number of **high quality child care** settings for young children with both English- and Spanish-speaking caregivers.

We have **braided and blended funding** from the Early Learning Division, our Coordinated Care Organization (CCO), several statewide foundations, and private business. Parents are providing leadership in the planning and implementation of our strategies.

While it is too early to see Kindergarten Assessment scores changing, we are seeing other benefits from increased **cross-sector services to young children and their families** as explained on the attached sheet. It will take increased investments to expand the scope and scale of services.

To realize the benefits of these systems changes will require legislative acceptance of a long-term return on investment as well as support of our K-12 public school system. Schools are the foundation of our strategic framework for getting children ready for school and for supporting stable families.

We thank you on behalf of the children and families whom we serve,

Board of Directors, Early Learning Hub, Inc.



**Dean Andretta**  
Community Member



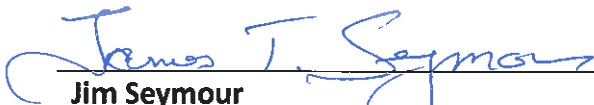
**Steve Kuhn**  
Community Member



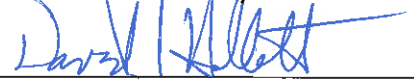
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**Melinda Veliz**  
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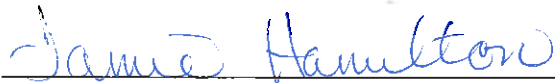
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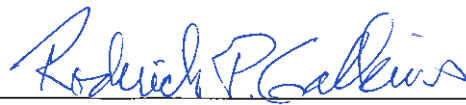
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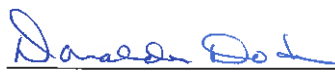
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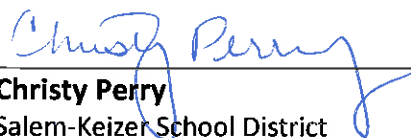
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Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency



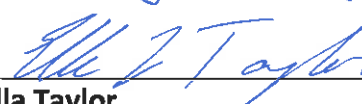
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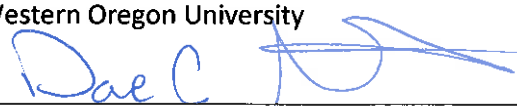
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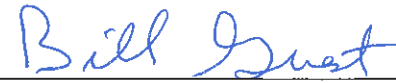
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