

SB 213 Early Learning Hubs

Senate Human Services and Early Childhood Committee

March 12, 2015

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

For the record, I am Kimberly A. Williams, Program Director for North Central ESD Early Education. I 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.

- A child's brain develops more in the first five years of life than at any other time, creating the foundation for all future learning and development.
- During the first few of life, 700 new synapses or neural connections are formed every second. If a child is in child care for 8 hours a day, that equates to over 20 million new synapses formed while in child care. Early Learning experiences are focused on a child's learning and development can make a tremendous impact on a child's future.

The 4 Rivers hub is yet to be formalized but is drawing upon the experiences and expertise of early learning providers and will work to amplify our work through cross sector collaborations. The Hub will leverage and coordinate existing program such as home visiting, and Head Start to build on the good work of these programs, and share lessons learned across service providers in-order to provide the most relevant and effective services to families.

As part of the 4Rivers hub, we will all be asked to think beyond the mission and reach of our individual programs to ensure that the children and families in our region who most need services are receiving them. We are accepting collective responsibility for the underserved children, and families in our region. As part of the 4Rivers Hub strategies we will support child care providers to reach early learning and development standards through the QRIS. This work will elevate providers in our community and build our supply of high quality early learning environments.

Strengthening early learning through the Hubs will benefit children, families, and our region. I urge your support of SB 213

Sincerely,

Kimberly A. Williams

Program Director

North Central ESD Early Education