

SB 213: Early Learning Hubs

Senate Human Services and Early Childhood Committee

March 12, 2015

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

For the record, I am Lacey Sharp a Kindergarten teacher in Stanfield School District. 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.

We know that a child's brain develops more in the first five years than at any other time. As a HUB we are working with child advocates who work one on one with children and parents in this age range. If Oregon wants to get on top of Early Education, continuation of the work we are doing is a must. I have more connections with Head Start and Preschool teachers than ever before. We are sharing information and working to align with one another for the betterment of each child and family. Oregon's 40-40-20 will require investing in children before they enter the school doors. The HUB is helping us do this.

It is our responsibility as a community to ensure that the experiences a child has during those early years creates a strong foundation for future success. As an educator I am used to having very little knowledge of the experiences students are having before they enter the classroom. Being connected to early learning programs and services in my community has given me greater insight and helped me strengthened my own practices in the classroom. The HUB has given me opportunities to talk to other teachers who are doing the same things I am daily. We can talk about how to best help students because we have made these connections. We are sharing workshop ideas, inviting each other to conferences about Early Learning, and working to create a safe, friendly environment that will appeal to parents.

As a result of our partnership and innovation grant, our school is giving more information to our community about early learning opportunities and ideas on how to get involved. We are sending flyers about pre-school, library events, and school sponsored little learner's nights.

The Blue Mountain Early Learning Hub is changing the way we meet the needs of children and families in our community. It is changing the way we talk to our colleagues in other early learning venues and it is changing the way we think about early childhood education.

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

Thank You

Lacey Sharp