

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 Kim Whitley, COO of InterCommunity Health Network Coordinated Care Organization (IHN-CCO). 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.

Value of the work

- Healthy children and families are the cornerstone of a healthy society.
- The research is so clear that investing early makes a tremendous impact on later life, not just in education, but in health too.

How Hubs add value

- The systems transformations in health and early learning are built upon the belief that local community leaders are the best change agents we have.
- Together we are holding ourselves accountable for better understanding our community needs and working together to meet them.

Impact I have seen

- The focus on developmental screenings has led to coordination among multiple community partners to understand this work and ensure the data is tracked, gets to the primary care homes, and families are engaged and part of the process.
- The CCO and the Early Learning Hub are coordinating in areas where coordination has not previously existed. For example the relationships being forged have recently assisted in the success of “Books for Babies”. A Lincoln County School District program in collaboration with Samaritan Health Services and the Nurse Family Partnership. Additionally, the Collective Impact Model used to support the Early Learning Hub has allowed area participants and community stakeholders to have a shared vision for change leading to a joint approach with agreed upon actions.

Ask

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

Sincerely,

Kim Whitley, MPA
VP COO