

SB 213: Early Learning Hubs
Senate Human Services and Early Childhood Committee
March 1, 2015

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

My name is Lori Hale, Principal at Lincoln Primary School in the Pendleton School District 16R. I am submitting testimony in support of SB 213. This would make the Early Learning Hubs permanent and continue the work local communities have undertaken to align early learning systems, support thriving families and ensure children are ready to succeed in kindergarten.

There is no great return on investment than the one make in the early years of a child's life. For many students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, learning gaps appear in early childhood. Large numbers of disadvantaged students enter kindergarten behind in early reading and mathematics skills, oral language development, vocabulary, and general knowledge.

Implementing all of the components of a strong early learning program is difficult and requires a sustained effort to improve teaching and learning in the early years. Maintaining such an effort requires school leaders and policymakers to promote public awareness of the importance of a system to improve early learning.

The hub is creating 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. For example, we have already seen critical relationships forming between our childcare providers and preschool/kindergarten programs. These connections are critical to ensuring our young children are ready to succeed in kindergarten.

As a result of our partnership and innovation grant, children and families are benefiting from the early learning and K-12 collaboration. We are preparing to open the Pendleton Early Learning Center in the fall of 2015 and we realize the partnerships we share under one roof with help us achieve common goals. The continued support of the hub would help us strengthen the collaboration efforts we have begun in Eastern Oregon.

The Blue Mountain Early Learning Hub is changing the way we meet the needs of children and families in our community. I urge you to support SB 213 and this transformation of early learning in Oregon.

Thank-you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Lori Hale
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