



PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL EDUCATION

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Telephone: (503) 916-3152 Fax: (503) 916-3174
Mary Pearson- Director

February 21, 2017

To the Honorable Members of the Oregon State Legislature:

Portland Public Schools (PPS) is writing on behalf of the valuable programs and services provided by Columbia Regional Programs (CRP) to our district. CRP provides essential supports to students and families who experience low incidence disabilities across 22 school districts throughout Multnomah, Clackamas, Hood River and Wasco counties. CRP provides these needed services to young children and students ages birth to 21 years old.

Students who experience a low incidence disability often need additional supports, services and expensive equipment in order to access their education. CRP provides all of these services, professional development and equipment to over 1000 PPS students. Adequate funding for CRP is essential in order to provide the services our students to access their education and receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), as required by law.

Our collaborative partnership with CRP allows us to provide high quality services to students and training to staff in the area of autism related services. PPS currently has 814 students who qualify for these important services. We believe that without the expertise and support provided from CRP, our services to students would suffer. Additionally, CRP provides necessary supports to meet our requirement of FAPE to over 200 students with other low incidence disabilities; Blind/Visually Impaired, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Orthopedically Impaired, and Traumatic Brain Injury.

I feel strongly that the services provided by CRP are essentials to the districts they support. Providing appropriate educational services for students with disabilities is a growing challenge for all school districts. Without CRP, our most vulnerable students would suffer.

Respectfully,

Mary Pearson
Sr. Director, Special Education
Portland Public Schools



David Douglas School District

Learn · Grow · Thrive

Ken Richardson, *Superintendent* | 11300 NE Halsey Street, Portland, Oregon 97220 | Phone 503-252-2900

To The Honorable Members of the Oregon State Legislature:

I am writing in support of the programs and services provided by Columbia Regional Programs. Regional programs serve eligible students birth -21 years of age who are the most impacted by the following disability areas: Autism, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Severe Orthopedic Impairments, Deaf Blind, and Vision Impairments. Columbia Regional Programs serves students in 22 districts throughout Multnomah, Clackamas, Hood River, and Wasco Counties.

Columbia Regional Programs provides sophisticated equipment to support standing, walking and sitting for students with Orthopedic Impairments. This is a cost effective way for needs to be met, rather than each district purchasing and storing equipment for a variety of students and needs.

For students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing, they provide classrooms with highly trained staff and sophisticated curriculum to meet their communication needs. For students who attend our district schools, they provide staff trained in sign language and mobility and orientation to allow students to be as independent as possible in our schools. Audiology services are also provided are fill a vital need for many of our families.

Additionally, Columbia Regional Programs provides district support for students with Autism through sub grants, consultation and training. As you are aware, the incidence of this disability has grown dramatically over the years and our district has struggled to meet the needs of students. Their sub grant, support and professional learning has allowed us to hire a district Autism Specialist so we can build expertise and competence in our district staff to serve students identified with Autism. This is a sustainable model and I applaud Columbia Regional for their innovation.

Columbia Regional Programs has worked diligently to expand their training program and offerings to districts. They provide a myriad of training opportunities for certified and classified staff at no cost. They have proven to be customer service oriented and flexible by offering trainings at central locations as well as trainings in our district at a time that aligns with our training calendar.

I feel strongly that every service provided by the regional programs in this state is essential for the educational progress of students. The regional model allows services for our students with low incidence disabilities to be provided in a cost effective way. Please consider funding Regional Programs at a level that will allow them to fulfill our student's need.

Respectfully Submitted,

Barbara Kienle
Director Student Services

Visit our website: www.ddouglas.k12.or.us Email: David_Douglas@ddsd40.org

School Board | Bryce Anderson Frieda Christopher Donn Gardner Christine Larsen Kyle Riggs Cheryl Scarcelli Ancheta Andrea Valderrama



David Douglas School District

Learn · Grow · Thrive

Ken Richardson, *Superintendent* | 11300 NE Halsey Street, Portland, Oregon 97220 | Phone 503-252-2900 | Fax 503-256-5218

February 1, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

As Director of the Multnomah Early Childhood Program (MECP) in Region 6, I would like to express support of the programs and services provided by Columbia Regional Programs. The Regional Programs serve eligible students, statewide, birth to 21 years of age whom are most impacted in the following disability areas: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Deaf/Heard of Hearing, Deaf/Blind, Vision impairments, Severe Orthopedic Impairments, and Traumatic Brain Injuries.

Columbia Regional Programs serve students with low incidence disabilities in 23 school districts throughout Multnomah, Clackamas, Hood River and Wasco counties. As the largest Regional Program in the state, funding levels have a significant influence on the service to students in these 23 districts including the Multnomah Early Childhood Program EI/ECSE students. Sufficient funding for Regional Programs statewide is critical to meet the needs of the students and families we serve.

The Multnomah Early Childhood Program respectfully requests the legislature increase funding to match the growing number of students served by Regional Programs as well as the increased service (staff and equipment) costs. Increased and stable funding for Regional Programs is essential for students with low incidence disabilities from birth to age 21 for equitable access to achieve educational success.

Since 2007, there has been a 56% increase in students eligible for Autism services and a 27% increase in students eligible for Deaf/Hard of Hearing services. The projected 2017-2019 number of eligible students in Regional Programs is 10,152. Funding levels, as currently outlined in the proposed budget, will not adequately cover the service costs for the growing number of eligible students in need of service. The current funding shortfall means a 10% decrease in Regional Program funding, and likewise means 30% less than it would be if adjusted for inflation and student growth. The overall funding shortfall, if not adjusted for inflation and student growth, would be equal to \$11.9 million. Adverse results of inadequate funding would mean less direct services provided to students and the potential for negative effects on educational and functional outcomes of students.

The Multnomah Early Childhood Program supports an increased funding level that will sustain current Regional Program services and will provide additional staff and equipment to meet increasing needs. MECP believes that each and every service provided by Regional Programs are essential for the ongoing educational progress of the students served. Please reconsider the funding allocation for Regional Programs and fund them at a level to keep up with the growing number of students as well as the costs to provide services.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Grotting
Director of EI/ECSE, Region 6
Multnomah Early Childhood Program
David Douglas School District

Visit our website: www.ddouglas.k12.or.us Email: David_Douglas@dds40.org

School Board | Bryce Anderson | Frieda Christopher | Donn Gardner | Christine Larsen | Kyle Riggs | Cheryl Scarcelli Ancheta | Andrea Valderrama



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Portland, OR 97236-1049
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FAX (503) 762-3689

January 24, 2017

To The Honorable Members of the Oregon State Legislature:

Centennial School District is writing on behalf of the programs and services provided by Columbia Regional Programs which serves students with low incidence disabilities in 22 school districts throughout Multnomah, Clackamas, Hood River, and Wasco counties. The regional program provides services to eligible students birth to 21 years of age in the following disability areas: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Severe Orthopedic Impairments, Deafblind, and Vision Impairments. As the largest Regional Program in the state, funding levels have great impact on students, including students in Centennial School District.

Adequate funding for Regional Services is critical if we are to meet the needs of the students we serve. I am writing to respectfully request that at a minimum, the Legislature maintain funding to continue the current level of services including audiology for the 2017-2019 biennium.

Centennial is a medium sized district and we rely on the services of Columbia Regional Program to serve our eligible students and families. We do not have the capacity to provide services to these children with low-incidence disabilities without the expertise and funding from the Columbia Regional Program and we could not meet the needs of these students without the support we receive from Columbia Regional.

In addition to direct services provided to eligible students, our district staff takes advantage of high quality professional development opportunities, support and coaching from Columbia Regional. The program staff is flexible and responsive to individual district needs.

I feel strongly that each and every service provided by Regional Programs in this state is essential for the on-going educational progress of some of our most vulnerable students.

Centennial School District supports a funding level that will sustain current services.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori Silverman".

Lori Silverman
Director Student Services
Centennial School District

February 18, 2017

To the Honorable Members of the Oregon State Legislature:

I am writing on behalf of the North Clackamas School District in support of the Columbia Regional Program, which provides services to students with complex disabilities.

Students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing, Blind, Visually Impaired, have Orthopedic Impairments, or qualify with Autism Spectrum Disorder are served by Columbia Regional Program from birth through age 21. Currently, North Clackamas has 350 students who receive specialized services, equipment and consultation support. Additionally, Columbia Regional provides valuable professional development opportunities at no cost to the teachers and staff who care for and educate students in these special populations.

Columbia Regional provides this service and support to 22 school districts that otherwise would not have the means to support their special education population. Without them, many of our most fragile students would not adequately or equitably access their education or make gains toward independence.

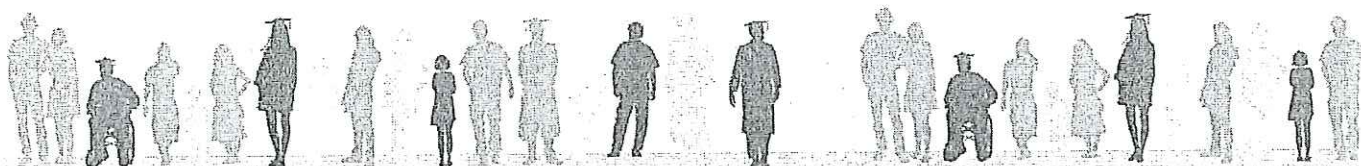
Funding levels currently outlined in the Governor's proposed budget would not adequately cover the cost of services for the growing number of eligible students needing highly specialized care. The current funding proposal would eliminate access to the population of students who can least afford it. Without funding at least at the current level, services to these students will decline or vanish entirely requiring each district to purchase equipment and provide services on their own. This is not a sustainable plan nor is it cost effective.

North Clackamas School District supports a funding level that will maintain the current services and provide the staffing needed to fulfill our students' needs.

Respectfully submitted,



Vivian Garrison
Executive Director of Special Education





LAKE OSWEGO SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of Special Services

4750 Jean Road ▪ PO Box 70 ▪ Lake Oswego, Oregon 97034-0070

Telephone (503) 534 2359 ▪ Fax (503) 534-2370

February 2, 2017

To the Legislative Funding Committee,

This is a letter of support for increased or at minimum, level funding, for the Columbia Regional Program (CRP). The Lake Oswego School District views these services as vital to the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education for students with low-incidence disabilities. As a medium sized district in Clackamas County we rely on the CRP staff and services for students with Hearing Impairments (audiology is a very valued service by our parents), Vision Impairments (Mobility Training and Braille services), Orthopedic Impairments (equipment loans and repairs), and Autism Support Services in the form of flow through dollars that fund our autism services.

Training is a major component of the CRP service package. They provide training for parents, students and all level of school staff. The trainings are up-to-date with the most effective techniques available across all of the disability impairments listed above. The trainings are tailor made in collaboration with each district. Some of the trainings are across districts which offers a very valuable county collaboration forum, and some of the trainings are specific to a district program and happen within that district.

As a Regional Advisory Committee Member for the past 5 years I have a first-hand account of how the CRP staff and administration have developed a collaborative and flexible service model that has allowed the school districts in Clackamas to not only provide services to students with low-incidence disabilities, but to actually develop services models that are some of the best in the state.

I strongly support funding of the Columbia Regional Services Program. If you would like more information or if you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Patrick Tomblin
Executive Director of Special Services
Lake Oswego School District
503-534-2359 Voice
503-534-2370 Fax
tomblinp@loswego.k12.or.us



MOLALLA RIVER

SCHOOL DISTRICT
TONY MANN, SUPERINTENDENT

412 S. SWEIGLE
AVENUE P.O. BOX
188
MOLALLA, OREGON
97038
503-829-2359

January 29, 2017

To The Honorable Members of the Oregon State Legislature:

The Molalla River School District is writing on behalf of Columbia Regional Program, which serves students with low incidence disabilities in 22 school districts throughout Multnomah, Clackamas, Hood River and Wasco Counties. The regional program provides services to approximately 10,152 students projected for the 2017-2019 biennium. This represents a significant increase in the past 10 years (in 2007 the number of eligible students was approximately 2,513) of students with significant needs.

The Molalla River School District requests consideration that the Legislature increase funding to match the need. Kids coming to our doors are more complex and present with more need than ever before, and districts such as Molalla River depend on the services and training opportunities Columbia Regional Program provides to meet our basic legal mandates to educate every child. We are a rural district and our resources are limited because we don't have an economy of scale. The services provided by Columbia Regional Programs exemplify the values Oregon holds to apply preventative intervention not only for better long-term outcomes for students with disabilities, but to also meet the mandate for each child when they reach age 22; that we educate these children so they are contributing members of society who have access and opportunities for independence and a chance for competitive employment.

Columbia Regional Program provides services for students who experience deafness, hardness of hearing, blindness, visually impairment, deaf/blind, autism, orthopedic impairments and traumatic brain injury. Columbia Regional Program is a key partner and ally in not only providing direct services to some of these students, but help smaller, rural districts in establishing and maintaining high quality programming that get results. One aspect of the services that cannot be overlooked is a network of training for program staff that districts simply don't have the expertise to attain by themselves.

Not only has the need increased for children with low-incidence disabilities in terms of sheer numbers of students who fit these categories, but we are also facing a dangerous shortfall of professionals in the state to provide the expertise that Columbia Regional Programs brings to districts.

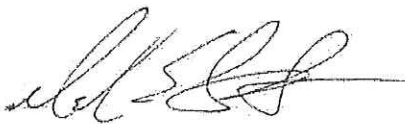
At current funding levels in the Governor's proposed budget, rural districts especially, will bear not

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: CALVIN NUNN (CHAIR), MARK LUCHT, (VICE -CHAIR), LIZ CRUTHERS, LINDA LE. ESKRIDGE,
RALPH GIERKE, NEAL LUCHT, CRAIG LOUGHRIDGE PROUDLY SERVING THE COMMUNITIES OF: CLARKES, DICKEY PRAIRIE,
MAPLE GROVE, MOLALLA, MULINO, RURAL DELL AND SCHUEBEL

only a substantial cost increase to attempt to bring the services to the district, but outcomes for our most vulnerable children are expected to diminish.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Salitore", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael Salitore, Director

Office of Supported Education



West Linn-Wilsonville School District 3Jt
Administration Building

To: Regional Committee Oregon State Legislature
From: Jennifer Spencer-Iiams, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services
Re: Support for Columbia Regional Services
Date: January 31, 2017

This letter is in support of the Columbia Regional Program (CRP) and the outstanding service that they provide to the children, families, and staff of the West Linn-Wilsonville School District.

In the five years that I have worked with the West Linn-Wilsonville Schools, the staff at CRP have been effective partners in the education of all students. Our district is committed to an inclusive model of services, where every child is educated at his/her own neighborhood school, regardless of their learning style, needs, or disability. This vision requires us to develop strong capacity at every school to work with all children. The team at CRP has been instrumental in moving this vision forward for children who experience disabilities in the areas of orthopedic impairments, hearing or vision issues, and autism spectrum disorder.

Lisa McConachie and her team at CRP work hard to understand our district and what needs we might have, partnering with us to find solutions that may be different than in other districts. Several times a year, the CRP leadership team reaches out to us directly to gather feedback and input on what our needs might be and how well their current services are working. I have always found the CRP team to be open to suggestions, willing to innovate, and demonstrating excellence in customer service.

Columbia Regional Program is flexible in finding, while staying committed to their mission of increasing capacity around the needs of children with low incidence disabilities. Their current model involves a combination allowing some funding to flow through, where it makes more sense for local district staff to be performing the work, and maintaining the highest level of expertise in their program so they can continue to provide leadership and consultation.

One example of the successful partnership with the CRP team is embodied in our professional learning plan for instructional assistants. A CRP Autism Specialist, Mark Klassen, came out to meet with me and assess the learning needs of our instructional assistant team in the area of autism spectrum disorder. He also listened carefully to information about the culture and style of

our district, which is very important to us in terms of professional learning that is coherent with our district vision. He then took this information and developed a series of learning workshops, and sent those ideas back to me to ensure that this would meet our needs. Mark and a partner then led this series of workshops very effectively. They also looked for instructional assistants that were willing to have them come out to provide some job-embedded coaching on the key strategies and techniques. This was an extremely positive process for our team and elevated the capacity of our instructional assistants to better support the learning of children with autism.

In addition to the learning that they provide our staff in terms of workshops, CRP also facilitates some professional learning communities of educators from many districts on topics such as assistive technology. Our instructional coordinators have found this to be a truly valuable to continue to deepen their expertise in supporting the educational success of all learners.

Finally, the CRP team offers workshops that many of our families attend. These opportunities for families to learn more deeply about the conditions that their children experience, as well as high leverage strategies that they can implement at home, strengthens the partnership of families in the educational process.

Lisa and her team at CRP are important consultants to me personally, and to our entire WLWV staff. Having a group like CRP that we can turn to increase expertise and to help problem-solve has been an important part of our success in creating learning communities in WLWV where all children are engaged. Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Spencer-Iiams, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent
WLWV Schools
503-673-7026
spencerj@wlwv.k12.or.us



Gladstone School District 115

17789 Webster Road
Gladstone, OR 97027-1498
(503) 655-2777 FAX: (503) 655-5201

Kelly Welch, Ed.D.
Director of Special Services

February 1, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

Gladstone School District is writing this letter of support for the Columbia Regional program, which serves students with low incidence disabilities in our district as well as in 22 school districts throughout Multnomah, Clackamas, Hood River and Wasco counties. The expertise and service provided for students with hearing, vision, orthopedic and deafblind disabilities are essential in supporting school districts, students and families. Columbia Regional's efficient use of regional funds to meet our needs as a district as well as a region has provided many opportunities

Columbia Regional Program provides timely professional development opportunities for districts that provide multiple means of participation so if timing or distance could be issues there are options. This is just one of the many ways that they work collaboratively with districts to flexibly meet their needs. As district needs vary based on size and capacity, the team at Columbia Regional has offered training in our district to specifically meet a need we have. I have never made a request to anyone at Columbia Regional that was denied, their ability and willingness to problem solve to work within their capacity while meeting our need is outstanding.

The audiology services that were reinstated have provided immediate relief to several families in our district. This was a service that families had relied on for years and were comfortable with using. Although the families had insurance to meet the need, they were not being accessed consistently due to distance and lack of relationship when the audiology services were stopped at the Columbia Regional Program. Since it was reinstated, the services are being accessed. As a result, students can hear better, families are able to get their children current assessment and technology support in proximity to where they live and most exciting they have improved educational outcomes.

Funding of the regional programs is essential to the work we are doing in the Gladstone School District. Minimally they need to be funded to continue the current level of services. The level of expertise in low incidence disabilities is imperative to our district, the families and most importantly the students.

Sincerely,

Kelly Welch, Ed.D.
Director of Special Services
welchk@gladstone.k12.or.us



Oregon Trail School District No. 46

Aaron C. Bayer, Superintendent
36525 SE Industrial Way, Sandy OR 97055-0457
www.OregonTrailSchools.com

Phone: (503) 668-5541
FAX: (503) 668-7906

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing this letter of support for Columbia Regional Program. Our district has benefited tremendously from our work with CRP, and we would like to continue this good work. We have benefited greatly as a district with the support to staff, families and students.

The EA coaching provided has been extremely helpful for our EAs, both at Wilcox and our buildings, particularly those who needed additional skills to be successful in their settings. They have come and worked 1:1 with our staff, which has been amazing. They have also come and done trainings with an entire staff, such as Zones of Regulation, with a training that used both direct instruction, coaching and modeling.

The monthly ASD specialist meetings have been essential for our autism specialist, keeping her abreast of new developments and relevant information, and allowing her the access to work with other specialists. They have also been able to bring in keynote speakers and experts in the field, which would not be available to us otherwise. The trainings that they offer to staff are something that we would not be able to provide. The parent education is also something that would be difficult for us to provide, and one that has benefited the community and district as a whole.

From an occupational therapy perspective, they have provided access to materials and programs to help our students that would not be financially possible for our district. They have a pilot program that helped our occupational therapist determine what augmentative communication program was best for a student. They loan us furniture (mat tables, desks, joysticks, mice, etc) that help our students with low incident needs gain access to the school curriculum. They will come out to help us work with students, providing us expert consultation that would be otherwise unavailable to our district.

From a speech perspective, they have an extensive ASD library of resources that we use regularly, as well as the ability to consult with their augmentative communication specialist. We also work with their hearing specialist to collaborate and allow for students to facilitate student-led meetings. The HI specialist also provides resources for teachers. They also provide consultative and related services and attend meetings.

The customer service is exceptional, so far as to help us cover for our autism specialist when she was on maternity leave. The approach has always been to ask us what we need and how they can help, and they are always enthusiastic to help.

Thank you for your time and attention, I would be happy to talk more at your convenience,

Dr. Katie Schweitzer
Student Services Director, Oregon Trail
katie.schweitzer@ortrail.k12.or.us



Clackamas Education
SERVICE DISTRICT

January 18, 2017

Dear Reader,

Please consider this letter of support for Columbia Regional Programs as you make funding decisions for the 2017-19 biennium.

Clackamas Education Service District supports the most vulnerable students in the ten school districts in our county through its operation of the Life Enrichment Education Program (LEEP). We serve students K-21 who have complex and multiple disabilities. Support from the Columbia Regional Program is essential to our ability to fulfill our mission.

Many of our students have orthopedic impairments. Equipment to enable the children to access their education is prohibitively expensive. Children grow, and so the piece of equipment that worked last year may not work this year. Utilizing CRP allows us all to leverage the taxpayer investment by sharing this specialized equipment across multiple counties. Having physical therapist expertise at Columbia Regional to see what is new and improved means that my staff aren't using their time interfacing with catalogs and manufacturers; they are able to work with children.

In addition to the motor equipment, we rely on them for augmentative communication devices. The process to identify which device is best for a student requires a great deal of trial and error. Again, buying the equipment for trial and error procedures would be beyond our financial ability, leaving students with reduced communication supports.

We rely on the expertise at CRP for staff training. The team at CRP brings together cohorts of licensed and classified staff from around the region to learn from experts in the field. This is particularly useful in creating shared understandings, as in their on-going supports for paraeducators working with children with autism. They also offer workshops with a specialized focus that my team does not possess, such as supporting students with cortical vision impairment. The responsiveness and flexibility of the CRP has proven very helpful. They have come to my district to provide student-specific training, as well as conducting group trainings.

In short, I urge you to maintain an adequate funding level for the Columbia Regional Program. They are invaluable partners in supporting our students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Linda Eastlund', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Linda Eastlund
Special Education Director
Clackamas Education Service District



Clackamas Education
SERVICE DISTRICT

January 18, 2017

Greetings,

As one of the constituent clients of the Columbia Regional Program services, our program is concerned about future funding of Regional programs. At minimum, these programs should be funded at a level which ensures that current level of services can be maintained.

Regional Programs provide expertise to all the children in our county who have low incidence disabilities such as deafness, blindness, autism, traumatic brain injury, and orthopedic impairments. School districts and early childhood special education programs could not access this level of expertise independently and their students would suffer greatly from a loss of critical services without sufficient funding provided to Regional Programs. Services include consultation, direct training and supports, augmentative communication and specialized motor equipment, audiology, and professional development. Having access to the Columbia Regional Program ensures that we can use our program funding more efficiently, sharing these specialized staff and supports with other counties and other districts in our region.

In Clackamas county, there are over x number of children ages birth to five who benefit from these supports. The Clackamas Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education Program enjoy a robust partnership with Columbia Regional Program which enables us to leverage and combine resources to meet needs across our county. The professional development provided through Columbia Regional Program has continued to expand the skills of my staff in meeting the needs of children with low incidence disabilities and enable them to provide higher quality support to their families.

Sincerely,

Carol Moore, Director of Early Childhood Education
Clackamas Education Service District