



March 29, 2021

Columbia Pacific CCO Testimony in Support of Early Learning Hub Funding

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain and Members of the Joint Education Subcommittee:

My name is Mimi Haley and I am the executive director of Columbia Pacific CCO, the sole coordinated care organization (CCO) serving approximately 30,000 OHP enrollees in Clatsop, Columbia, and Tillamook counties. I also serve on the governance council of the NW Early Learning Hub. I am here today to offer my organization's support for fully funding Early Learning Hubs in the 2021-2023 budget.

I have had the pleasure and honor to represent the health care sector on the NW Early Learning Hub Governance Council since 2015. As you know, Early Learning Hubs are a critical part of Oregon's solution to address the complex needs of families raising children from pre-birth through age five.

As a CCO, we also serve the needs of the children and families from impoverished and often marginalized communities within our service area. When the Early Learning Hub and the CCO come together with other key stakeholders in early childhood success, positive change happens.

Both CCOs and Hubs are tasked as local conveners to develop local solutions for children and families. Our Hub has been instrumental in ensuring there is no wrong door for families attempting to access the myriad of programming and services that support early childhood health and success.

Among other things that we have worked on together, the NW Early Learning Hub worked with Oregon Pediatric Improvement Program to develop county-specific asset maps, workflows and referral processes to ensure that our CCO children who are identified as high risk through the ASQ screening process in primary care clinics are able to receive the EI/ECSE services that they need to address developmental delays. The CCO is now continuing this work to embed new processes in primary care, as well as address identified gaps in services.

We have partnered annually to send pre-K enrollment information, such as for Kinder Camps and Preschool Promise, to our CCO mailing list, to broaden awareness of the importance of early childhood learning. The Hub has now hired enrollment coordinators to better match families to the pre-K programs that work best for them. Too often the good work being done is stymied by the lack of coordination which can both identify redundancies and gaps in the system to more efficiently serve families.

Our Hub administers the lists for 0-5 children in our service area who are interested in receiving age, gender and culturally appropriate books mailed to their homes monthly through the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. This is just one example of the many resources that our Hub brings to our families.

As we developed our CCO Health Equity Plan, we benefited from the impressive work done by the Hub to identify the needs and structural barriers faced by communities of color and those with limited English proficiency. Our Hub's strategic plan has identified specific opportunities for the CCO and the Hub to work together to address the needs of these marginalized populations.

For all the reasons above, I ask that the Legislature restore the \$1.4 million cut which was levied on hubs during a COVID-related special session to balance the budget.

We are just beginning to understand the impact of the pandemic on families with young children. Families are struggling to care for their children while maintaining employment, and those who faced economic insecurity prior to the pandemic have taken the brunt of the impact of the last year.

Families need coordinated services now more than ever before. BIPOC families have been disproportionately impacted by the virus, women have disproportionately borne the burden of childcare throughout the shutdown, and we have a real risk of undoing the progress we've made.

With enhanced investment from the federal government and a healthy revenue forecast, we have a responsibility to fully fund the local coordination that ensures families have somewhere to turn when they need help.

On behalf of the young children and families in the Columbia Pacific CCO, I urge your support for full hub funding. Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective.

Sincerely,

Mimi Haley, MBA, MPH
Executive Director
Columbia Pacific CCO