



Request for Application

Early Learning Kindergarten Partnership & Innovation

2014-2015

Grant Application Due Date: March 28, 2014

Oregon Department of Education
Early Learning Division
775 Summer Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Table of Contents

I.	Introduction.....	3
II.	Format and Application Instructions for Submission.....	3
III.	Eligibility and Use of Funds	4
IV.	Key Dates.....	4
V.	Application Narrative.....	5
	A. Community Partnership.....	5
	B. Target Population.....	5
	C. Proposal.....	5
	D. Leveraging Funds.....	5
VI.	Budget Narrative.....	5
VII.	Application Evaluation.....	6
	A. Evaluation Criteria.....	6
	B. Evaluation Scoring Rubric.....	7
VIII.	Reporting.....	8
	Appendix A: Application Cover Page	9
	Appendix B: Application Budget Sheet.....	10
	Appendix C: Statement of Assurances and Commitment.....	11

It is the policy of the State Board of Education and a priority of the Oregon Department of Education that there will be no discrimination or harassment on the grounds of race, color, sex, marital status, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age or disability in any educational programs, activities, or employment. Persons having questions about equal opportunity and nondiscrimination should contact the Oregon Department of Education, 255 Capitol Street NE, Salem, OR 97310; Telephone (503) 947-5600; Fax (503) 378-5156.

Section I: Introduction

The Early Learning Kindergarten Readiness Partnership & Innovation Program, as established by Oregon House Bill 2013 during the 2013 Oregon State Legislative Session, provides funds through June 30, 2015 for the purposes of improving the readiness of children for kindergarten. The goals of this program are to: create opportunities to increase the connection between early learning and K-12 education by investing in innovative and promising models for early learning/K-12 integration across the state; to build a body of evidence that Oregon can use to create stronger alignment between its early learning and K-12 education systems; and to promote community and school partnerships that result in measurable increases in children's readiness for kindergarten.

Oregon's Early Learning Council (ELC) is seeking applications from Early Learning Hubs¹, school districts, Education Service Districts, nonprofit organizations, post-secondary institutions or a collaboration thereof to plan and implement innovative approaches for linking early learning with K-12 education. Applications should demonstrate an intentional focus on implementing key elements of effective early learning and K-12 partnerships, including, but not limited to: facilitating cross-sector collaboration; engaging families as equal partners in children's learning and development; setting meaningful targets for kindergarten readiness; using data to measure progress; and strengthening instructional practices through shared professional development for early learning providers and early elementary teachers.

Applications should maintain a clear focus on equity and address factors that contribute to achievement gaps that often exist between students who are economically disadvantaged, students learning English as a second language, and students who are African American, Hispanic or Native American and their peers. Applications should also identify strategies for reaching children with specific risk factors as defined by Oregon Administrative Rule 414-800-0105, and/or children who are not currently enrolled in formal Pre-K or child care programs, including those participating in license exempt and relative care.

Section II: Format and Application Instructions for Submission

- Applications, including cover page, proposal narrative, budget, and budget narrative must be submitted by email to EarlyLearning.OEIB@state.or.us.
- Faxed applications will not be accepted.
- Adhere to page limits.
- Include page numbers on all pages.
- Name the file in this format: **The agency** it is being submitted from, **underscore**, and **PartnershipInnovation** (example: HappyKidsSchool_PartnershipInnovation.)
- An **electronic version of the completed application including a scanned copy of the signed Statement of Assurances and Commitment**, in Word (.doc or .docx), or PDF format must be received by **5:00 P.M. on Friday, March 28, 2014**.
- Late application submissions will not be accepted.
- A hard copy of the signed Statement of Assurances and Commitment should also be sent by mail to the Early Learning Division, attention Brett Walker, at 775 Summer St. NE, 3rd Floor, Salem, OR 97301.

All questions and inquiries may be directed to Brett Walker with the Early Learning Division by email at brett.walker@state.or.us or by phone at 503.378.5160.

¹ An Early Learning Hub is an existing or newly created entity designated by regional partners to coordinate early learning services designed to produce better outcomes for children: increase kindergarten readiness for at-risk children, to increase the stable and attached families and to ensure system coordination and efficiency in order to attain Oregon's 40-40-20 Educational Goal. Regional partners may include counties, cities, school districts, education service districts, community colleges, public universities, private educational institutions, faith based organizations, nonprofit service providers, and tribes.

Section III: Eligibility and Use of Funds

Any K-12 school district, Education Service District, nonprofit organization, post-secondary institution, Early Learning Hub, or collaboration thereof may apply for funds. Applications must demonstrate a collaborative partnership between at least one elementary school and one provider of early learning services.

Acceptable uses of funds include:

- Shared professional development for providers of early learning services and K-3 teachers;
- Personnel;
- Family engagement strategies;
- Operating supplies such as materials, manipulatives, books, curriculum; and/or
- Furniture that is developmentally appropriate for young children.

Grant funds may not be used for capital expenses or to supplant existing federal or state funds. Capital does not include operating supplies such as materials, manipulatives, books, curriculum or furniture that is developmentally appropriate for young children.

The total fund for this program is approximately four million dollars. There is no minimum or maximum award amount. However, it is expected that applicants will be able to demonstrate that the proposed plan will:

- Reach a scale significant enough to be transformative at the district or community level;
- Be sustainable without additional State funding beyond the 2013-2015 biennium; and
- Be replicable in other communities and school districts throughout Oregon.

Final award decisions will take these factors into consideration.

Section IV: Key Dates

Activity	Date
Request for Applications	February 4, 2014
Technical Assistance Webinars	February 11, 2014 2:00-3:00 PM; February 26, 2:00-4:00 PM
Proposals Due	March 28, 2014
Anticipated Award Date	May 2, 2014
Interim Grant Report Due	January 31, 2015
Grant End Date	June 30, 2015
Final Grant Report Due	July 31, 2015

Section V: Application Narrative

Proposals should be submitted in narrative form and provide a detailed description of the applicant's plan for linking early learning and K-3 education, including demonstration of readiness, proposed strategies to be implemented, and key partners and people who will be involved. The narrative should address each of the questions listed in this section.

Proposals should be no longer than 8 pages single spaced using 11 point font with one inch margins.

A. Community partnership

1. Describe the organization that will serve as the lead applicant for this proposal. Why is this organization uniquely positioned within the community to lead this partnership?
2. With which organizations in your community will you partner? Please include plans for collaboration with the Early Learning Hub in your region.

B. Target population served

3. Please describe your target student population.
4. What do Kindergarten Assessment data and third grade OAKS data indicate regarding the need for early learning/K-3 partnership among your target population?
5. How have you and/or partner organizations assessed the needs and desires of the community, particularly parents of children ages 0-6, to ensure that the proposed strategy will be appropriate, effective, and sustainable?

C. Proposal

6. Please describe the major elements of your plan for linking early learning with K-3, including key strategies, activities, and outputs, and the types of data you will use to measure progress.
7. How will your plan address the following priority areas for this strategic investment:
 - a. Improve the readiness for kindergarten of children as measured by the Oregon Kindergarten Assessment.
 - b. Increase opportunities for shared professional development between providers of early learning services and K-3 teachers.
 - c. Authentically engage families and form a three-way partnership between schools, the early learning communities, and families.
 - d. Invest in serving a significant number of children in communities with a high concentration of poverty, underserved racial or ethnic groups, non-native English speakers, or rural and remote communities.
8. What research or documented best practice is your plan based on?

D. Leveraging funds

9. How will you leverage grants funds to align with and supplement other sources of funding to strengthen the connection between early learning and K-3? This may include existing or new sources of federal funding for early learning, state funds, and/or braiding and blending local funding sources.

Section VI: Budget Narrative

Please provide a description of how you intend to allocate funds granted, including recurring costs through the life of the grant. To the extent possible, please differentiate between Year One (2014) and Year Two (2015) expenditures. Please be sure to describe amount and sources of matching funds and in-kind donations. Finally, please address how your plan will be sustained beyond the 2013-15 biennium.

Your budget narrative should be no longer than one single-spaced page using 11 point font with one inch margins.

Section VII: Application Evaluation

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

Criteria	Minimally Meets All Criteria	Satisfactorily Meets Some Criteria	Clearly Meets All Criteria	Points Awarded
<p>1. Organizational Capacity & Collaboration (4 pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead applicant and partner(s) have a proven track record of ability to achieve developmental outcomes for children. • Application demonstrates that a strong partnership has been formed between early learning and K-12. • Application demonstrates clear plan for collaborating and aligning with the appropriate Early Learning Hub. 	(0-1 points)	(2-3 points)	(4 points)	
<p>2. Partnership & Innovation Plan (10 pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan is responsive to community needs, as evidenced by local needs assessment data or information. • Plan includes a clear set of strategies, activities, and outputs for linking early learning and K-3. • Plan demonstrates a clear commitment to family engagement and engaging families as equal partners in children’s learning and development in a three-way collaboration between early learning, schools, and parents/families. • Plan includes opportunities for shared professional development between providers of early learning services and K-3 teachers. • Plan is based on research or documented best practice. Plan effectively addresses one or more of the identified priority areas. 	(0-3 points)	(4-7 points)	(8-10 points)	
<p>3. Target Population (10 pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application effectively uses Kindergarten Assessment and third grade reading and math data to establish a baseline and demonstrate need. • Plan demonstrates a clear commitment to equity and identifies a target population of children who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet the definition of ‘at risk’; and/or • Are English language learners or others disproportionately represented by the achievement gap in third grade reading proficiency; and/or • Live in rural or remote communities. 	(0-1 points)	(4-7 points)	(8-10 points)	
<p>4. Outcomes (10 pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan establishes clear targets for kindergarten readiness, and is likely to improve kindergarten readiness in areas measured by the Oregon Kindergarten Assessment. 	(0-1 points)	(4-7 points)	(8-10 points)	
<p>5. Sustainability & Scalability (6 pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application effectively addresses how the early learning/K-3 partnership will be sustained beyond the 2013-15 biennium. • Plan is likely to be replicable in other communities. 	(0-1 points)	(2-4 points)	(5-6 points)	
<p>6. Budget (6 pts)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan aligns with, and supplements, federal programs to provide moneys for educational purposes. • Plan describes strategy for leveraging various funding sources, including blending and/or braiding of funding among local partners, to support early learning/K-12 alignment. • Budget is appropriate for number of children served. 	(0-1 points)	(2-4 points)	(5-6 points)	
Total Points Awarded				

Members of the award committee will use the following scale to make scoring determinations:

Application Scoring Rubric
<p>Clearly Meets All Criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application thoroughly addresses the criteria.• Application has several exceptional strengths that will significantly benefit children.• Application has no major weaknesses; normal provider effort and normal Early Learning Division (ELD) technical assistance will be sufficient to minimize risk.• Application is extensive and detailed, and has a high probability of improving kindergarten readiness and/or third grade reading proficiency.
<p>Satisfactorily Meets Some Criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application addresses the criteria, with some omissions.• Application has some strengths that are likely to benefit children.• Application has contains some significant weaknesses; special grantee emphasis and close ELD technical assistance will likely minimize risk.• Application has an acceptable probability of improving kindergarten readiness and/or third grade reading proficiency.
<p>Minimally Meets All Criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Application does not adequately address the criteria, and may contain significant omissions.• Application includes few if any strengths and is not likely to benefit children.• Application includes several significant weaknesses; special grantee emphasis or close ELD technical assistance may not be sufficient to minimize risk.• Application is unlikely to improve kindergarten readiness and/or third grade reading proficiency.

The highest rated applications, as determined by the award committee, will move forward into the second round of evaluation, in which the award committee will follow up with case specific questions for each application.

Section VIII: Reporting

Recipients of these funds must provide an interim and end of grant report to the Early Learning Council via ODE's Early Learning Division (ELD). The interim report will focus on processes, outputs, and activities to date, and the end of grant report will include at least:

- (a) Description of outputs and activities related to implementation of the early learning/K-12 partnership strategy;
- (b) Impact on kindergarten readiness, in areas measured by the Oregon Kindergarten Assessment;
- (c) Impact on the attitudes, behaviors, and instructional practices of early childhood educators and kindergarten teachers; and
- (d) Impact on the attitudes, behaviors, and practices of children's families.

The Oregon Education Investment Board (OEIB), or one of its partners, plans to administer web surveys, which may be administered prior to, during, and following the grant period and to conduct in-depth interviews among participants. Grant recipients should be prepared to partner with the Early Learning Division and the OEIB to support the administration of these evaluations.

Early Learning Kindergarten Readiness Partnership & Innovation Program Cover Sheet

Lead applicant:	
Type of organization:	
Lead applicant address:	
Contact person(s):	Title(s):
Email address:	
Phone number:	

2014-2015 Statement of Assurances and Commitment

Name:

Fiscal Agent:

- The fiscal agent assures and certifies compliance with the regulations, policies, and requirements as they relate to the acceptance and use of state funds for programs included in this application.
- The recipient or the senior designate agrees to carry out the partnerships and use of funding as proposed in the application.
- The project director will collaborate with the Early Learning Division and Oregon Education Investment Board to submit annual reports to the Early Learning Council as outlined in the Request for Applications.
- Violations of the rules or laws may result in sanctions, which may include but are not limited to reduction or revocation of grant award.
- The applicant certifies that to the best of his/her knowledge the information in this application is correct; that the filing of this application is duly authorized by the governing body of this organization, or institution, and that the applicant will comply with the general statement of assurances.
- The applicant certifies to the best of his/her knowledge the guidelines for Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) are being followed. It is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records.

Please Print Name of Project Director

Signature of Project Director

Date